REAPPRAISING THE HISTORY OF THE JEWS IN THE NETHERLANDS

Edited by

HANS BLOM, DAVID J. WERTHEIM HETTY BERG and BART T. WALLET



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ROBERT JOSEPH LITTMAN
who continued what his father Louis had begun
יהא זכרם ברוך

'Get wisdom, get understanding: Forsake her not and she shall preserve thee' PROV. 4:5

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JUDITH HUMPHREY 1936–1996

Historian of Cretan Jewry Born and raised in England

An adventurous and independent spirit who travelled the world, she spent ten years living on the Brouwersgracht, Amsterdam

On the twenty-fifth anniversary of her passing the family offers a dedication of this important book in her memory

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

THE HISTORY OF THE JEWS IN THE NETHERLANDS needs to be reassessed. For more than two decades no authoritative general history of the Dutch Jews has been published, while a wealth of new studies has appeared. Although the existing general histories of this topic are still of much value, the field has developed to such an extent that a new reference work has become a pressing need. Historians from both older and newer generations have shed significant new light on almost all eras of the history of the Jews in the Netherlands: the field has explored new areas, changed emphases, and overturned hierarchies. While Dutch Jewish historiography has traditionally focused on Sephardi history in early modern times and Ashkenazi history in later ages, recently scholars have started to take an interest in Ashkenazi history in early modernity and Sephardi history in later centuries. Heretofore Dutch Jewish historiography was for the most part limited to the history of the Jews in the Low Countries, but recently much new scholarship has been conducted on Dutch Jews in the New World. While the post-war historiography was infused with the trauma of the Holocaust, the last few decades have facilitated a more distant view of this recent past. And while economic history had been mostly confined to the early modern period, we now know—not least thanks to new technical research possibilities—much more about the Dutch Jewish economic history of later ages as well. To this may be added the significant disciplinary developments within Jewish historiography itself as well as the impact of new disciplines such as memory studies, diaspora studies, postcolonial studies, and digital humanities.

This book derives from *The History of the Jews in the Netherlands*, published by the Littman Library of Jewish Civilization in 2002, but that volume, ground-breaking as it was at that time, has been thoroughly updated for this publication, to the extent that we consider it a new publication rather than a revised edition. Four of the chapters have been completely rewritten by the original specialists, and three chapters as well as the Introduction have been completely rewritten by new authors. All the others have been updated to take account of new scholarship. The volume thus aims to provide a new assessment of the history of the Jews in the Netherlands, for students, scholars, and all those interested in the history of Dutch Jewry, their place in the world, and in Jewish history in general.

The initiative for the original publication from which this work derives came from the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW) and its committee for the culture and history of the Jews in the Netherlands; and this new publication was again prepared under the auspices of that committee, which had in the meantime been incorporated into the Menasseh ben Israel Institute. The Institute is a co-operative academic endeavour of the University of Amsterdam and the Jewish Historical Museum, and the support of those two organizations was therefore also vital to the creation of this volume. The editors wish to express their thanks not only to the authors, who wrote their contributions with passion and dedication, but also to the following organizations and individuals: Mireille Berman and the Dutch Foundation for Literature; Connie Webber and the Littman Library of Jewish Civilization for making this English translation possible; David McKay for translating the book; Mariëlle Hageman for editing the illustrations; and Margreet Witvoet for her editorial support. We are also very grateful for the financial support of the Stichting Collectieve Maror Gelden Nederland, Stichting 't Trekpaert, Stichting Levi Lassen, Maatschappij tot Nut der Israëlieten in Nederland, and Henriette Boas Stichting, without which this book could never have been published.

The Editors January 2021

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NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION AND NAMES

The transliteration of Hebrew in Littman Library books reflects consideration of the type of books they are in terms of their content, purpose, and readership. The system adopted therefore reflects a broad approach to transcription, rather than the narrower approaches found in the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* or other systems developed for text-based or linguistic studies. The aim has been to reflect the pronunciation prescribed for modern Hebrew, rather than the spelling or Hebrew word structure, and to do so using conventions that are generally familiar to the English-speaking reader.

In accordance with this approach, no attempt is made to indicate the distinctions between *alef* and *ayin*, *tet* and *taf*, *kaf* and *kuf*, *sin* and *samekh*, since these are not relevant to pronunciation; likewise, the *dagesh* is not indicated except where it affects pronunciation. Following the principle of using conventions familiar to the majority of readers, however, transcriptions that are well established have been retained even when they are not fully consistent with the transliteration system adopted. On similar grounds, the *tsadi* is rendered by 'tz' in such familiar words as barmitzvah. Likewise, the distinction between *het* and *khaf* has been retained, using *h* for the former and *kh* for the latter; the associated forms are generally familiar to readers, even if the distinction is not actually borne out in pronunciation, and for the same reason the final *heh* is indicated too. As in Hebrew, no capital letters are used, except that an initial capital has been retained in transliterating titles of published works (for example, *Shulḥan arukh*).

Since no distinction is made between *alef* and *ayin*, they are indicated by an apostrophe only in intervocalic positions where a failure to do so could lead an English-speaking reader to pronounce the vowel-cluster as a diphthong—as, for example, in *ha'ir*—or otherwise mispronounce the word. An apostrophe is also used, for the same reason, to disambiguate the pronunciation of other English vowel clusters, as for example in *mizbe'ah*.

The *sheva na* is indicated by an *e*—*perikat ol, reshut*—except, again, when established convention dictates otherwise.

The *yod* is represented by *i* when it occurs as a vowel (*bereshit*), by *y* when it occurs as a consonant (*yesodot*), and by *yi* when it occurs as both (*yisra'el*).

Names

In deciding whether to anglicize (or occasionally latinize) personal names, we have been guided by the standard practice of contemporary historians in each individual case. Most classical and medieval figures with an international reputation are generally referred to by a latinized or anglicized name in English. Certain categories of prominent historical figures, especially those dating from before the First World War, generally have their names anglicized in English: these include rulers and aristocrats, Catholic saints and church leaders, and a few renowned artists and thinkers. Titles such as 'the Elder' are anglicized, and aristocratic titles such as 'duke' are generally given in English, unless there is no exact English equivalent to the original title.

Some individuals have multiple versions of their name in their own language, especially in pre-modern times. In that case, we have opted for the version in widest use today: for instance, Hieronymus Bosch rather than Joen or Jeroen.

Jews living in the Netherlands who had Yiddish or Hebrew names were generally known by the Dutch transliterations of their names, which often differ from the standard English transliterations. The Dutch spellings of such names have been maintained in the translation, except in the rare case of individuals with an international reputation whose names were spelled differently outside the Netherlands during their lifetime.

Historical place names are often anglicized, again following the standard practice of contemporary historians. For French-speaking places in the Southern Netherlands (later Belgium), the French name rather than the Dutch is conventionally used in English, and that convention is followed here. Street names and the like have been left in Dutch. Some traditional anglicizations of place names, such as Leghorn, are no longer in wide use and have not been adopted here. Modern equivalents of place names are sometimes provided for clarity's sake: for example, 'Danzig (now Gdańsk)'.

In Dutch surnames with particles such as 'van' and 'de' written as separate words, the initial particle is capitalized if and only if the surname is used in isolation, without personal names or initials: 'Mr Van der Kamp' but 'J. M. van der Kamp'. This does not apply to Flemish names or names in which the particle has merged with the rest of the name, such as 'Vanderkamp'.

Names of publications are generally given in the original language followed by an indicative English translation, except where a well-known English translation of the publication exists.

The names of organizations are generally given in English, except for the names of German political and military organizations in the world wars, which are conventionally left in German, with an explanatory gloss where necessary. Where the English name of a Dutch organization first appears, the original Dutch name is sometimes given for reference or to eliminate ambiguity. Occasionally, the Dutch name of an organization is used because any one English translation might be controversial or introduce bias, as in the case of the Nederlands Israëlitisch Kerkgenootschap. When an organization has a commonly used Dutch acronym, that acronym has sometimes been introduced and adopted.

ABBREVIATIONS

BMGJWN Bijdragen en Medede(e)lingen van het Genootschap voor Joodsche Wetenschap in

Nederland

BMGN Bijdragen en Medede(e)lingen betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden

DJH Dutch Jewish History. Volumes cited are as follows:

J. Michman and T. Levie (eds.), *Dutch Jewish History*, vol. i: *Proceedings of the Second Symposium on the History of the Jews in the Netherlands* (Jerusalem, 1984)

J. Michman (ed.), Dutch Jewish History, vol. ii: Proceedings of the Fourth Symposium on the History of the Jews in the Netherlands (Assen, 1989)

J. Michman (ed.), Dutch Jewish History, vol. iii: Proceedings of the Sixth Symposium

on the History of the Jews in the Netherlands (Assen, 1993)

NAKG Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis

StR Studia Rosenthaliana

INTRODUCTION

DAVID J. WERTHEIM

THE HISTORY of the Jews in the Netherlands has many faces. It is a story of golden ages and dark pages, of tolerance and discrimination, of isolation and adaptation, one that tells of rabbis and administrators, socialists and liberals, industrialists and intellectuals, and unfolds in provincial congregations and major cities, in neglected hovels and stately homes, along the rain-swept canals of Amsterdam and on the tropical shores of the Caribbean.

In the vast diversity of images yielded by the description of this rich past, historians have found just as great a variety of patterns, generally inspired by their equally wide range of ideological agendas. For example, some religious—mostly Christian—historians regarded the Jews as a 'chosen people' whose changing fortunes revealed God's handiwork, even after biblical times, and those historians hoped and expected that the Jews would one day convert to Christianity. A very different school, focused on integration, saw them as model Dutch citizens and sought mainly to emphasize both how privileged they were to live in the tolerant Netherlands and how much they had contributed to the country. Still other historians, especially after the Second World War, aimed instead to show—sometimes, but not always, from a Zionist perspective—that no matter how firmly the Jews in the Netherlands had believed they were Dutch, they had never been accepted as such, and that their integration had been an illusion. There was also a large proportion of Dutch Jewish historical writing after 1945 based

¹ J. Basnage, L'Histoire et la religion des juifs, depuis Jesus-Christ jusqu'à présent, 11 vols. (The Hague, 1707–11); Y. van Hamelsveld, Geschiedenis der joden: Sedert de verwoesting van de stad en Tempel van Jerusalem, tot den tegenwoordigen tijd (Amsterdam, 1807); I. da Costa, Israël en de volken: Overzicht van de geschiedenis der Joden tot op onzen tijd (Utrecht, 1876); H. J. Koenen, Geschiedenis der Joden in Nederland (Utrecht, 1843). Basnage's magnum opus had a Jewish counterpart in She'eris yisroel (1743) by Menachem Man ben Shlomo ha-Levi (Amelander), a historical work inspired by Jewish religious values. Among these books, Koenen's is the only one about Dutch Jewish history in particular; the others cover Jewish history in general.

² For a Jewish example, see S. Seeligmann, 'Die Juden in Holland: Eine Charakteristik', in J. Fischer et al. (eds.), Festskrift i Anledning af Prof D. Simonsen's 70-aarige Fødselsdag (Copenhagen, 1923), 253–57; for non-Jewish examples, see H. Brugmans and A. Frank, Geschiedenis der Joden in Nederland (Amsterdam, 1940).

³ J. Michman, H. Beem, and D. Michman, *Pinkas: Geschiedenis van de joodse gemeenschap in Nederland* (Amsterdam, 1999); J. Meijer, *Balans der ballingschap: Bijdragen tot de geschiedenis der joden in Nederland* (Heemstede, 1981).

on the urgent sense that the past of the nearly destroyed community should not be forgotten.⁴

When the first edition of this book was published—in 1995, nearly two hundred years after the emancipation of the Dutch Jews—the ambition of the editors Hans Blom, Rena Fuks-Mansfeld, and Ivo Schöffer was to break free of ideologically determined perspectives of this kind. They deliberately took the more neutral approach of studying Jews as a minority group. In retrospect, this approach can be interpreted as consistent with contemporary social debates about integration and identity politics, although that was never a conscious choice on the part of the editors. Schöffer wrote in his introduction: 'the editorial board has sought to give the present historical study a special slant by dwelling on the minority status of "the" Jews in the Netherlands through the centuries. The relationships and links between a Jewish minority and a non-Jewish majority are therefore referred to time and again.'⁵

More recently, this perspective has developed substantially, and above all quantitatively: the past two decades have witnessed a flood of new monographs, biographies, scholarly articles, exhibition catalogues, conference proceedings, dissertations, and MA theses on a multitude of topics concerning the history of the Jews in the Netherlands, and the general field of Jewish history has also developed rapidly. Researchers have continued to enhance our understanding of traditional topics such as the Sephardi community in the seventeenth century or the oppression and persecution of the Jews during the German occupation, but they have also explored less familiar territory, such as early modern Ashkenazi history, Jewish book printing, post-war Jewish history, the history of Jews in the Dutch colonies, and Jewish industrial and business history. Thus when the first edition of the book went out of print, creating a need for a new edition, it made sense to update and thoroughly revise the volume so that this new research would have a place in it.

That also gave the new team of volume editors—assembled for this project because of the death of two editors of the first edition, Ivo Schöffer and Rena Fuks-Mansfeld—the opportunity to change the emphasis. First of all, the orientation towards minority history in the first edition had led to a narrower focus on the unique aspects of Dutch Jewish history than found in other studies, such as J. Michman et al., *Pinkas: Geschiedenis van de joodse gemeenschap in Nederland* ('Pinkas: History of the Jewish Community in the Netherlands'), published slightly earlier, which describes Dutch Jewish history more in the context of international Jewish history. The aim in the present edition is—without detriment to the more nationally oriented 'minority perspective', which the current editors still see as a suitable point of departure—to arrive at a better balance, one that

⁴ M. H. Gans, Memorboek (Baarn, 1971); English edn. Memorbook (1977). For a similar perspective, see H. Beem, De verdwenen Mediene: Mijmeringen over het vroegere joodse leven in de provincie (Amstelveen, 1982).

⁵ J. C. H. Blom, R. G. Fuks-Mansfeld, and I. Schöffer (eds.), Geschiedenis van de joden in Nederland (Amsterdam, 1995), 12.

does greater justice to the fact that Dutch Jewish history has an international Jewish context.⁶

In this respect, our approach participates in a fundamental discussion about the nature of historical writing about the Jewish past, one that since the first edition of the present work has grown into a mature discipline in its own right, following in the footsteps of Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi's pioneering work Zakhor.⁷ Many painstaking theoretical analyses, often critical, of the field of Jewish historical writing have been published.8 One question they have underscored is whether there can be any single, cohesive Jewish history. Is there really any factor that ties together Jewish histories in different regions and over different periods? And in the absence of any such factor, what is the point of Jewish history? Should its events not instead be seen as belonging to the histories of the places where they occurred? While some historians are inclined to go that far, they too were criticized by those who still defended a degree of essentialism in Jewish history—questioning, for instance, whether a local or national perspective on Jewish history could do justice to the Jewish character of that history.9 This debate touches on the question of whether Jewish history can best be described in a national or an international context, of how much of Jewish identity has been based on national loyalties and how much on international Jewish solidarity. As differently as these questions are answered by different historians, and as much as they are debated, one major tendency in this context is that scholars, more and more often, are running up against the untenability of traditional national, social, and religious categories.

This tendency was brought to the fore by the 12th International Symposium on the Culture and the History of the Jews in the Netherlands, on the theme of 'Borders and Boundaries in and around Dutch Jewish Culture', which was entirely devoted to the ambiguity of the dividing lines between and within Jewish communities. ¹⁰ Similar issues arose in a number of the research areas in question. For example, the view of Dutch Jewish history as limited to the geographical area of the present-day Netherlands has been expanded. A case in point is the broadening of scholarly attention to include Jewish communities in the Dutch colonies alongside those in the motherland. The first edition recounted the history of the Dutch Jewish communities in the colonies in the early modern period but could say very little about later times. We can now address this subject in greater detail, thanks to new sources such as monographs

⁶ Similar projects in other countries, such as Germany and the United States, include M. A. Meyer, M. Brenner, and M. Breuer (eds.), *Deutsch-jüdische Geschichte in der Neuzeit*, 4 vols. (Munich, 1996–7); J. D. Sarna, *The American Jewish Experience* (New York, 1986).

⁷ Y. H. Yerushalmi, Zakhor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory (Seattle, 1982).

⁸ D. Biale (ed.), Cultures of the Jews: A New History (New York, 2002); M. J. Rosman, How Jewish Is Jewish History? (Oxford, 2007); M. Brenner, The Same History Is Not the Same Story: Jewish History and Jewish Politics (Bloomington, Ind., 2006).

⁹ Rosman, How Jewish Is Jewish History?

¹⁰ J. Frishman, D. J. Wertheim, I. de Haan, and J. J. Cahen (eds.), *Borders and Boundaries in and around Dutch Jewish History* (Amsterdam, 2011).

on the Dutch Jews in Surinam, an exhibition with a catalogue about Jews in the Caribbean, and new findings about the Jewish community in the Dutch East Indies. ¹¹ Furthermore, the focus of attention has shifted from the settlement histories and economic role of these Jews to the new social position of Jews within the colonial system. The fact that Jews in the colonies were much closer to the dominant strata of the population, and in fact belonged to those strata, and that many of them—like other Europeans—traded in enslaved people, has given us a more nuanced perspective on whether Jewish history is necessarily a 'lachrymose' tale of suffering, and has blurred the boundaries of the idea that the Jewish community was always a disadvantaged minority.

Blurred boundaries of a different, more disciplinary, variety are illustrated by another line of reasoning: the so-called economic turn in Jewish history, a term that indicates how modern historians, in their writings on Jewish history, have not only traced economic developments but also used them to shed light on issues in cultural history. Other examples include new ideas about how the Jewish role in sectors such as the textile industry or the diamond industry was linked to the formation of Jewish social and political identity.¹²

The internationalization of Dutch Jewry in the present edition is not limited to a fresh look at colonial matters. Historians have long been aware that Dutch Jewish culture in the seventeenth century was influenced by the Iberian culture of the Sephardi Jews and the central and eastern European culture of the Ashkenazim. But more recently, they have also examined other foreign influences, such as the German Haskalah, the French Enlightenment, the German rabbinical seminaries, and the eastern European and German refugees in the 1880s and 1930s.

Alongside the traditional and Zionist perspective that the Jews in the Netherlands were part of the diaspora, there is a growing realization that the Netherlands was central to a number of Jewish diasporas. While the concept of the western Sephardi diaspora, which had Amsterdam as a centre, is well established,¹³ the concept of a diaspora with the Netherlands as a centre can be expanded to encompass nineteenth-century international Sephardi and Ashkenazi networks and twentieth-century Dutch Jewish diasporas in Israel and America, where large groups of Dutch Jews settled, especially after the Second World War. This has contributed to a new awareness of the

¹¹ W. Vink, Creole Jews: Negotiating Community in Colonial Suriname (Leiden, 2010); D. M. Metz, R. E. Koe, and H. Berg (eds.), Selamat sjabbat: De onbekende geschiedenis van Joden in Nederlands-Indie (Amsterdam, 2014); J. Cohen, A. Ben-Ur, and A. Mulder (eds.), Joden in de Cariben (Zutphen, 2015). A. Ben-Ur, Jewish Autonomy in a Slave Society; Suriname in the Atlantic World, 1651–1825 (Philadelphia, 2020).

¹² J. Karp, 'An "Economic Turn" in Jewish Studies?', AJS Perspectives: The Magazine of the Association for Jewish Studies (2009), 8–13.

¹³ Y. Kaplan (ed.), Religious Changes and Cultural Transformations in the Early Modern Western Sephardic Communities (Leiden, 2019).

ways in which Dutch Jewish history has always been influenced by international Jewish life. This insight has led to a gradual shift in focus away from a unique *species hollandia judaica* towards increased research on such international connections.¹⁴

Besides the blurring of geographical borders, new research has also blurred the boundaries of traditional historical periods. This is visible, for instance, in Irene Zwiep's treatment in this volume of the period surrounding the dawn of modern Jewish history (Ch. 5). Where past scholars located the roots of modernity in the eighteenth-century Haskalah and the emancipation decrees of the Napoleonic era, present-day historians see roots in the seventeenth century and even earlier. In her chapter, Zwiep offers a more nuanced view of the period before and after emancipation and shows that, for at least some Dutch Jews, the granting of equal civil rights was not such an abrupt break with the past as other historians—whether approving or critical of the shift—have assumed.

Recent studies have also placed greater emphasis on the blurring of borders within the Jewish community. For instance, the sharp dividing line between Sephardi and Ashkenazi Jews is increasingly likely to be treated in a more nuanced way. Historians have realized that, despite the very different histories of the two communities, they cannot be understood in isolation from each other, as Yosef Kaplan explains in his chapter (Ch. 4), in which he shows how, in the seventeenth century, the Ashkenazi Jews adapted to Sephardi practices. Not only did the identities of the two groups develop partly in relationship to each other, but there was also a good deal of cooperation and mutual influence.

Within this tendency to challenge traditional historical categories, the most fundamental development is a growing interest in the boundary between Jews and non-Jews—both its complexity and the ways in which it has been blurred. We see this, for instance, in the scholarly literature about the first Sephardi Jews who settled in the Netherlands. The perception of these people as Marranos—Christians who in their heart of hearts were still secretly pure Jews—has gradually made way for the term Conversos and an emphasis on the broad spectrum of possible identities within this group: some more Jewish than Christian, others more Christian than Jewish, others varying over time, and still others fitting into neither category. It no longer seems clear, or even relevant, to the new wave of historians whether this group should be characterized as Jewish or as Christian.

We see a similar problematizing of the boundary between Jews and non-Jews in reflections on assimilation, acculturation, and integration, three concepts that were discussed by Schöffer in the first edition of this book.¹⁵ While assimilation is the wholesale adoption of 'behaviour, attitudes, and outlook' and the disappearance of a

¹⁴ Seeligmann, 'Die Juden in Holland: Eine Charakteristik'.

¹⁵ Blom, Fuks-Mansfeld, and Schöffer (eds.), Geschiedenis van de joden in Nederland, 12–13.

Jewish identity, acculturation involves a partial adaptation. The term 'integration' relates to an orientation towards the acceptance of a minority in the society in which it lives and may, but need not, imply a degree of assimilation and acculturation. The distinction between Jewish and non-Jewish identity has by now been problematized in still other ways. The notion of hybridity from postcolonial studies, which posits that identities can be ambiguous and that what looks at first sight like strong acculturation can sometimes, paradoxically, be interpreted as a form of resistance to the dominant culture, has gained a firmer footing in Jewish studies in recent years. 16 The application in Jewish studies of other postcolonial concepts, such as orientalism and self-orientalization, has shown that Jews are sometimes expected to act according to certain stereotypes instead of assimilating.¹⁷ Finally, notions such as assimilation, acculturation, and integration have come under fire for too often assuming static cultures, one of which (for example, Jewish culture) adapts, to some degree, to another (for example, Dutch culture). This perspective overlooks the mutability of cultures and the fact that such mutability is brought about precisely by interaction between cultures. For example, if we regard the choice by many Dutch Jews in the early twentieth century to replace their religious identity with a socialist identity as a form of assimilation or acculturation, we forget that the choice was not an adaptation to the world around them but, rather, was aimed at changing the world around them. 18

Along with new research, the above-mentioned theoretical developments in the field necessitated a reappraisal of the history of the Jews in the Netherlands and that is what this edition sets out to achieve. To come to this, five chapters were revised by the original authors in the light of developments and new insights in the scholarly literature. Three chapters had to be rewritten entirely, first because the original author of Chapters 5 (1750–1816) and 6 (1814–1870), Rena Fuks-Mansfeld, had died, and the author of Chapter 9 (1945 to the present), Chaya Brasz, was unavailable to revise it for personal reasons, and secondly because they had to take account of the great strides in historical research on those particular periods. This opened up the opportunity for two representatives of a new generation of scholars to contribute to this book. Irene Zwiep rewrote Chapter 5 and Bart Wallet rewrote Chapters 6 and 9. Both have made grateful use of the work of their predecessors. This introduction, likewise, has made grateful use of the introduction to the first edition by the late chief editor of that volume, Ivo Schöffer. The publication of an English-language version of this edition has also

¹⁶ D. Sorkin, 'The New 'Mosaik' Jews and European Culture, 1750–1940', in J. Frishman and H. Berg (eds.), *Dutch Jewry in a Cultural Maelstrom*, 1880–1940 (Amsterdam, 2007).

¹⁷ I. D. Kalmar and D. J. Penslar (eds.), *Orientalism and the Jews* (Waltham, Mass., 2005); U. Brunotte, A. Ludewig, and A. Stahler, *Orientalism, Gender, and the Jews: Literary and Artistic Transformations of European National Discourses* (Leiden, 2015).

¹⁸ M. Mandel, 'Assimilation and Cultural Exchange in Modern Jewish History', in J. Cohen and M. Rosman (eds.), *Rethinking European Jewish History* (Oxford, 2009), 72–92.

afforded the opportunity for a number of slight revisions. These are mainly bibliographical references, minor corrections, and a small number of more substantial additions—mainly in Chapter 7—in response to comments on the Dutch-language edition.

THE MIDDLE AGES

B. M. J. SPEET

First Signs of a Jewish Presence

The history of the Jews in the Low Countries during the Middle Ages, normally defined as the period from the fifth to the sixteenth century, is inevitably a story with many gaps and great discontinuities, a story that often leaves us with more questions than answers or explanations. The reason is simple. Throughout the Middle Ages, the Netherlands had only a marginal Jewish presence, especially in the north. Medieval source materials, which are sparse in any case, show very few traces of Jewish life. Furthermore, those sources offer a lopsided and therefore distorted view, being almost all Christian in authorship. The lack of Jewish sources makes it impossible to say anything about Jewish life from the inside or to learn how Jews persevered in a Christian environment that was generally hostile towards them.

The earliest signs of a Jewish presence in the area date from the thirteenth century and first became visible in the southern Netherlands. As their numbers gradually increased, Jews eventually settled in the north as well. The great plague epidemic of 1349 led to a break in the historical record, because the Jews were blamed for the catastrophe and therefore persecuted and murdered en masse. Yet not long afterwards, we find fresh evidence of Jews in the region. Their presence in the southern Netherlands ended abruptly in 1370. But in the northern provinces, especially the county of Gelderland, they remained involved in moneylending, only to disappear with hardly a trace in the second half of the fifteenth century.

Major Changes

What we know for certain is that in the fourth century there were Jews living in several major Roman towns along the Rhine (Cologne), the Moselle (Trier), and the Main (Mainz). Even at that early stage, some Jews may have left those towns for Maastricht or Tongeren, but no evidence of that has been found. The collapse of the western Roman empire in the fifth century undoubtedly had a profound impact on Jewish communities in Cologne and elsewhere, yet their fate remains a mystery. It was not until three centuries later, when the Carolingian monarchs built a new empire on the ruins of the

Roman imperium, that the Jews re-emerged from anonymity. Charlemagne (who reigned as emperor from 768 to 814) and, in particular, his son Louis the Pious (r. 814–40) had a strikingly benign attitude towards the Jews, permitting them to practise their religion openly, build synagogues, own land, engage in trade—even in Christian slaves—and hold public office. This tolerant attitude was inspired in no small part by self-interest, since in those days the Jews were almost the only group capable of acting as intermediaries between the primitive, agrarian Carolingian society and the major commercial centres in the Middle East, India, and even China. In exchange for slaves, fur, and weapons, they bought spices, perfume, costly fabrics, precious stones, and other luxury goods there, which could not be produced in the West. In this relatively trouble-free period for Jews, the sources do not report any Jewish presence in the Netherlands.

In the tenth century, the Carolingian empire went into decline. As governing authority fell into the hands of local noble dynasties, a patchwork of territorial principalities took shape. In what would later be known as the Netherlands, these included the counties of Flanders, Holland, Hainaut, and Namur and the duchies of Brabant, Limburg, and Gelderland, as well as the prince-bishopric of Liège and bishopric of Utrecht (including the Oversticht, now Drenthe and Overijssel), over which the bishops of Liège and Utrecht respectively held sway.

Over the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the economic situation in western Europe changed dramatically. Monetary exchange began to replace barter, cities formed, and trade and industry became increasingly important. The Church, headed by the pope in Rome, had a hard time keeping up with these developments. At the Third Lateran Council in 1179, it prohibited moneylending at interest to fellow Christians, citing the biblical book of Deuteronomy 23: 19–20, which states that one is not permitted to charge interest to one's 'brother', only to strangers.

This prohibition did not apply to Jews. Since they were not Christians, they fell outside the scope of canon law. Moneylending, so indispensable to a money economy, gradually became an important Jewish line of business (PLATE 7). In truth, the Jews had little choice. Around that time, both the Church and secular authorities began to isolate them, arguing that their religious views formed a threat to Christian society, and that for that reason, contact with them should be avoided as far as possible. Jews were no longer permitted to hold public office, own land, or employ Christians as servants. Nor were they allowed to join guilds for artisans or tradespeople. They were thus effectively denied the right to practise crafts and trades, because these guilds held monopolies. What remained open to them was moneylending, and 'Jew' therefore became more or less synonymous with 'financier'—or 'usurer', as medieval sources called them.¹ Yet it is worth noting that Jews did not by any means have a monopoly in the money trade. Jews and investors from northern Italy, known as Lombards, played complementary

¹ J. Le Goff, *De woekeraar en de hel: Economie en religie in de middeleeuwen* (Amsterdam, 1987); English edn.: Your Money or Your Life: Economy and Religion in the Middle Ages, trans. P. Ranum (New York, 1988).

roles and sometimes competed for monopoly power over moneylending in a particular region or city.²

The First Settlements in the Netherlands

The rise of towns and cities in the Netherlands, first in Flanders and Brabant and later in the north, offered Jews new moneylending opportunities. Along the new trade routes, small communities in Flanders and Brabant grew into market towns, such as Ghent, Bruges, Leuven, Brussels, Liège, Mechelen, Zoutleeuw, Jodoigne, Sint-Truiden, and Tienen. A gravestone with a Hebrew inscription was found in Tienen in 1872, dedicated to Rebecca, the daughter of Rabbi Mozes, who must have been buried there around 1255 (PLATE I).

Most Jews who settled in the southern Netherlands probably came from the Rhineland, especially Cologne, which had a flourishing Jewish community as early as the thirteenth century. For instance, the Dominican friar Thomas of Cantimpré (1201–72) from Leuven writes in *Bonum universale de apibus*, a collection of miracle tales from the 1260s, that he had heard personally from the nun Katharina that she used to be called Rachel and had moved with her parents from Cologne to Leuven (in Brabant). There she befriended a priest who instructed her in the Christian faith. When Rachel's parents found out, they decided to take her back to Cologne. Thanks to the miraculous intervention of the Virgin Mary, Rachel was able to escape from her parents. She then had herself baptized, took the name Katharina—a name favoured by strikingly many converted Jewish women—and entered the cloister.

At one stage the presence of Jews in Brabant and their practice of usury deeply concerned Duke Henry III (r. 1248–61). He seems to have been sensitive to the Church's accusations that Christian rulers who admitted and protected Jews were indirectly encouraging usury and were thus implicated in the practice, a fact with serious consequences for the salvation of their soul. So when he sensed his end was near, he added a clause to his will stating that after his death all Jews were required to leave Brabant, unless they gave up usury and earned an honest living from then on. This was in the spirit of King Louis IX of France (also known as Saint Louis, r. 1226–97), who had issued a similar edict in 1254. We do not know whether Henry's widow Adelaide of Burgundy (r. 1261–7), who became the regent of Brabant after her husband's death, honoured Henry's wish. In any case, her son John I (r. 1267–94) did not. One of his first measures after taking over from his mother in 1267 was to permit the local authorities in Leuven to take in Jews under the same conditions that applied to Jews in Brussels. In 1270 John married Margaret, the daughter of Saint Louis. Having been raised in an anti-Jewish environment, she apparently had reservations about her husband's pro-Jewish

² R. Van Schaïk, 'On the Social Position of Jews and Lombards in the Towns of the Low Countries and Neighbouring German Territories during the Late Middle Ages', in M. Carlier, A. Grève, W. Prevenier, and P. Stabel (eds.), *Hart en marge in de laat-middeleeuwse stedelijke maatschappij* (Leuven and Apeldoorn, 1997), 165–92.

attitude. So she sought the counsel of two leading theologians, the Franciscan Johannes Peckham (*c*.1227–92) and the Dominican Thomas Aquinas (1225–74). Peckham advised her to drive the Jews out of Brabant, but Thomas Aquinas took a more moderate line, sending her his small treatise *De regimine Iudaeorum* ('On the Governance of Jews'). His argument in this work was that although Jews were consigned to perpetual servitude because they lacked the Christian faith, and the authorities could therefore do as they saw fit with them and their possessions, this did not give the authorities the unrestricted right to treat Jews unjustly or deprive them of their means of subsistence. It was therefore permissible, he concluded, to allow Jews to earn a living, to protect them, and to tax them. Although their money was tainted because it had been acquired by usury, that was not a problem as long as it was used for good Christian causes and the general welfare. Margaret chose to follow Aquinas's more pragmatic advice. Jews were allowed to remain in Brabant and were required, as they had been before, to pay an annual sum to Duke John I in return for his protection, even though this money had been earned by usury.

The same applied to the Lombards, also known as Cahorsins and spoken of in the same breath as the Jews. Lombards were Christians from Italy, who often worked in consortia and hence had more capital at their disposal than their Jewish colleagues. That made them attractive lenders for rulers, who were in constant financial need. Like the Jews, they fell under the ruler's protection and were therefore required to pay tribute. The number of Lombards in the southern Netherlands always exceeded the number of Jews. Where both groups were at work, they seem to have played complementary roles, each with their own responsibilities. Jews generally made short-term loans, usually for one or two weeks, at high interest, sometimes as much as 65 per cent a week. Lombards, in contrast, often made loans with a one-year period of maturity at an annual rate of 43 per cent. It should be emphasized, however, that credit from Lombards or Jews was not the only source of money in those days. Buying and selling annuities and rent charges became an increasingly important method as time went on. The main reasons for borrowing from Jews and Lombards were therefore to obtain short-term cash, and because they accepted buildings as security.⁴

The Northern Netherlands

The first Jews did not come to the northern Netherlands until the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century. Their presence there may have been a result of events in England and France. All the Jews had been expelled from England in 1290 by edict of

³ C. Cluse, Studien zur Geschichte der Juden in den mittelalterlichen Niederlanden (Hannover, 2000), 174–85. Cluse convincingly demonstrates that Thomas Aquinas's treatise was addressed not to Aleydis, but to Margaret of France. Cf. J. Stengers, Les Juifs dans les Pays-Bas au moyen âge (Brussels, 1949), 49–50, and A. H. Bredero, 'Het anti-joods gevoelen van de middeleeuwse samenleving', Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis, 64 (1984), 1–38: 23.

King Edward I (r. 1272–1307), after he had robbed them of all their money and goods. In 1306 the Jews had to leave France by order of King Philip IV (r. 1285–1314), known as 'Philip the Fair'. In 1315 his successor, Louis X the Quarreller (r. 1314–16), rescinded Philip's edict for various reasons, including the noteworthy argument that ordinary people could not do without Jewish pawnbrokers, since they relied on them when in serious financial trouble and in urgent need of cash. Seven years later, however, the Jews were expelled again by King Charles IV the Fair (r. 1322–8).

Some of the expelled English and French Jews undoubtedly first sought refuge in the Jewish communities in German cities in the Rhineland, later moving on, either further towards Poland or else to the neighbouring regions of Brabant, Limburg, Gelderland, and Overijssel. This latter possibility is suggested by the mention of a *Jodenstraat* ('Jew Street') in Maastricht in 1295. There is a record from 1377 of the sale of a parcel of land on the River Maas (Meuse) opposite the former *jodenschool* ('Jewish school'), probably a synagogue that also served as a school and beth midrash. Due to a lack of sources, we know little about the size of this Jewish community in Maastricht, perhaps the oldest in the Netherlands. In 1336 Reginald II, duke of Gelderland (r. 1326–43), confiscated the possessions of eight Jews for unclear reasons. Six of them—Mozes, Sander, and his mother Kele, Coepman (a byname for Jacob), Nathan, Simon, and Jodelyn—lived in Oldenzaal and the other two in Goor and Diepenheim. Their property consisted of a few coins, three houses, a one-eyed horse, a few debt instruments, and various pawned items, such as a silver cup, a stylus, a tablecloth, and a set of scales.

Around the same time there was also a group of Jews centred on a man named Gottschalck in Recklinghausen, a village near Oberhausen, who were mainly active in the Oversticht. He, his daughter Hanna, Leo of Münster, Gottschalck of Werden (near Düsseldorf) and his wife Hanna, Rosa of Rheinberg, and Moses of Cologne were involved in moneylending. Their main debtors were prominent burghers of Zwolle, most of whom had ties to the town authorities or to aristocratic families in Overijssel. Forty-nine debt instruments and three official documents from this consortium have been preserved; they date from the years 1332–49, most of them from the last three years of that period. Such consortia could also be found in the Rhineland. They were usually clustered around a leader with considerable capital, and the members were often related by blood and marriage. It was not unusual for women to be involved in moneylending.⁵

In 1339 Reginald II, who by that time had become the duke of Gelderland, was granted the right by Louis of Bavaria, the Holy Roman Emperor (r. 1314–47), to 'keep, have, defend, and protect Jews' throughout his duchy 'and to receive the usual and customary services from them'. The emperor had the power to grant this privilege because he regarded the Jews in his empire as his personal property.

⁵ H. Poppers, De joden in Overijssel van hunne vestiging tot 1814 (Utrecht, 1926), 4, and Cluse, Studien, 124–32.

The idea behind this perspective has a long history. As far back as the Carolingian period, the ruling dynasty had acknowledged that Jews were useful to society because of their economic activities. But since the Jews had no homeland, no government of their own, and no right to carry weapons, and were therefore defenceless, it was the ruler's responsibility to keep the Jews in his territories safe. The Jews were thus placed under his protection. Of course, in return for this protection, they were expected to pay taxes and provide services.

When the Church began to harden its stance towards the Jews from the twelfth century onwards, branding them a doomed people sentenced to perpetual servitude as their punishment for crucifying Christ, it supplied a theological basis for a legal construction that had been in effect for a long time.⁶ In 1236 Frederick II, Holy Roman Emperor (r. 1220-50), encapsulated this entire doctrine in an edict describing all the Jews in his kingdom as people who 'belong to us and our empire with their bodies and goods, over whom we have the right to do and act as we please and as we see fit'. This right was known as the Jewish prerogative or the Judenschutz. Because this right was a personal possession of the emperor's, he could sell it, give it away, or use it as collateral. But this special legal status was not entirely to the Jews' benefit. Unlike the feudal relationships between liege lords and vassals, their relationship with the emperor did not involve reciprocal rights and duties. The Jews had only duties and no rights. That left their protector free to relinquish the role of his own accord whenever he chose, to drive them out of his territory, or to cancel his debts to them. A few such cases are described above. Furthermore, the special bond between the Jews and their protector made them uniquely vulnerable. When the ruler's authority was called into question, or when he clashed with other authorities such as the Church or local leaders, Jews could be involuntarily drawn into the conflict, since they were seen as friends and financiers of the sovereign. Examples of this could also be given.

As mentioned above, Reginald II of Gelderland received the Jewish prerogative in 1339 as a personal favour from the Holy Roman Emperor, Louis IV the Bavarian. From then on the duke was entitled to regard all the Jews who lived or settled in his duchy as 'his' Jews, and to tax them accordingly. We find these revenues in the ducal accounts from the period. The 1346 account, for instance, lists eight Jews: Nathan, Zelichman, Jacob, and Koelman in Nijmegen, Bonnom and Saul in Emmerik, and Saul and Jozef in Zutphen and Doesburg respectively.

Severe Persecution

The years 1349 and 1350 formed a low point in the history of Jews in the Netherlands. The plague known as the Black Death broke out in Italian ports in 1348, spreading across western Europe at a whirlwind pace and ultimately wiping out about a third of the population. The causes of the catastrophe were then an utter mystery. Soon

⁶ G. Kisch, The Jews in Medieval Germany: A Study of their Legal and Social Status (Chicago, 1949), chs. 5 and 6.

rumours spread that the Jews had contaminated the water in springs and wells with poison made by wealthy Jews in Spain and then distributed by other Jews. In the blind panic that had seized the continent, this tale fell on receptive ears. The groups that spread it included flagellants, also known as Brothers of the Cross. Half-naked, wearing large hats with crosses on them, they would go from town to town—singing loud psalms, confessing their sins to each other, and striking each other with rods and scourges until the blood flowed—to call on the people to do penance for their sins, in the hope that God would spare humanity.

To what extent these flagellants were responsible for the mass slaughter of Jews during the epidemic is not entirely clear. What we do know for certain is that they were a cross-section of the general population—rich and poor, from humble craftspeople to town officials. Accordingly, the movement should not be seen as a release of pent-up fears and frustrations by a large group of disadvantaged people scapegoating the Jews, who, as they had been taught, were the enemies of Christianity, out to destroy Christian civilization. It is also noteworthy that contemporary sources draw no link between the persecution of the Jews and the flagellants. Later sources do make that connection, but that probably has to do with the fact that Pope Clement VI (r. 1342-52), nine days after describing the rumours about Jews poisoning wells as fictitious in his bull Quamvis perfidiam of 1 October 1349, had declared the flagellants heretics in the bull Inter sollicitudines. Another reason may be that by assigning the blame to the flagellants, he was drawing fire away from the truly guilty parties. In support of this view, there is proof of well-orchestrated measures in many towns, involving feudal lords and town authorities and their political power relations. For example, the Jews in Brussels probably fell victim to the disagreement between Duke John III (r. 1312–55) and his son Henry, in combination with the continual friction between ducal authority and the powerful towns of Brabant, which sought greater autonomy. The Jews paid the price for these conflicts because they were seen as favourites of the duke, who lent him money and paid him richly for permission to live there and for his protection. For instance, it is almost certain that Jews in Brussels were taken prisoner by order of the town authorities and that the duke's son Henry authorized their murder.⁷

In contrast to the southern Netherlands, few details are known about the massacre of Jews in the north. Albertus Snavel, mayor of Zwolle, wrote in his chronicle that all the Jews in his town were burnt 'out of love of God' in late August 1349 (PLATE 2). The victims may have included Gottschalck of Recklinghausen and his associates, given that around that time all his debt instruments came into the hands of the bishop of Utrecht. The chronicles in Gelderland say nothing of the plague, the flagellants, or the persecution of the Jews. Instead, they focus entirely on the struggle for the ducal title

⁷ For a detailed analysis of the possibility that the flagellants were involved in violence against Jews in 1349, see Cluse, *Studien*, 221–42. See also F. Graus, *Pest, Geissler, Judenmorde: Das 14. Jahrhundert als Krisenzeit* (Göttingen, 1987), 299–334.

between the two sons of Reginald II, who had died in 1343, and their followers, the Van Bronkhorsts and the Van Heekerens. Yet the ducal accounts of 1350 reveal the impact of the catastrophe. Under the heading of 'Receipts of Jewish debt instruments', there is a list of twenty-two Gelderland residents who had incurred debts to Jews. Another heading is 'Receipts of goods and pawned items from Jews', followed by a detailed list of objects. A third list of names and goods comes under the heading of 'Overview of goods from Jews'. The list ends with the remark: 'Paid: 7 mark and 6 schellingen to Lubbertus Boycholt for locking up and guarding the Jews' goods in the castle.'

All this suggests that both the bishop of Utrecht and the duke of Gelderland gained financially from the massacre of 'their' Jews. Their accumulated debt had been wiped out, and the Jews' possessions, pawned items, and debt instruments had come into their hands by virtue of their role as protectors. Margaret II, Countess of Hainaut (r. 1345–56), likewise profited financially from the catastrophe of 1349. That year's financial records for her county state that some 390 debt instruments had been found in the money boxes of six Jewish men and a Jewish woman and confiscated after the Jews were killed.⁸ It is difficult to say for certain whether the bishop, the duke, and the countess were partly responsible for the slaughter, or whether they played any other active role, but according to the Dominican Henry of Herford (c.1300–70), that was a definite possibility. In his chronicle of world history from c.1360, he remarked: 'In that year of 1349 the Jews were cruelly eradicated. This took place either because of their wealth, which many nobles and poor people, as well as their debtors, tried to obtain illegally—as I deem to be the truth—or because they, as generally reputed, maliciously poisoned the water all over the world—which I cannot accept as true.'9

New Settlements

In 1368 we find the first report since 1350 of Jews in the duchy of Brabant. According to a tax list from that year, there were then nine Jewish male heads of household living there with an unknown number of family members: seven in Brussels and two in Leuven. All of them had probably come there from France. The following year, three Jews left Brussels for an unknown destination. In 1370 the remaining six Jews were burnt at the stake, after being accused of stealing a cup of consecrated hosts from St Catherine's Chapel and then desecrating the hosts. ¹⁰ Their death put a definitive end (except in the duchy of Luxemburg) to the medieval Jewish presence in the southern Netherlands.

In the northern Netherlands, at least thirty years passed before Jews once again began to settle there. In 1385 Johel of Worms and his household received a permit from

⁸ Cluse, Studien, 132-57.

⁹ Liber de rebus memorabilioribus sive chronicon Henrici de Hervordia, ed. August Potthast (Göttingen, 1859),

¹⁰ For an account of the many mentions of Gelre and Nijmegen, see B. Speet, 'De joodse geldhandel te Nijmegen', in C. M. Cappon et al. (eds.), *Ad Fontes: Opstellen aangeboden aan prof. dr. C. van de Kieft* (Amsterdam, 1984), 401–16.

William I of Gelderland and Jülich (r. 1379–1402) allowing him to remain in the duchy for ten years in return for an annual tribute of 12 guilders. Apparently Johel had told the duke that he would like to settle in Roermond, judging by the fact that in the same permit the duke exhorted the Roermond municipal authorities to treat Johel and his family well, and in the same exemplary way in which the city had treated other Jews in the past. That same year, Zelichman Nathanszoon, his uncle David, and Mannus, all from Rheinberk, as well as Lyeverman from Siegburg, all received permission to settle in Gelderland. They chose Nijmegen. 11 It seems they liked it there, judging by the fact that in 1390 Zelichman's father Nathan and sons-in-law Vynelutan and Jacob joined them. Four years later, Jacob Gottschalkszoon from Neuss received a *jodenbrief* ('Jew letter') from the duke, which informed him of matters such as how much interest he was permitted to charge and how he could defend himself in court if sued by a Christian. As a special favour, he was not required to swear on the Bible or take a Christian oath but could swear the 'customary Jewish oath' to prove his innocence.

After 1400 the number of Jews wishing to settle in Gelderland rose considerably, thanks in part to the hospitable attitude of William's successor, Reginald IV (r. 1402–23), who continued his predecessor's Jewish-friendly policies. Most of them settled in Roermond, Arnhem, Venlo, Goch, Geldern, and, above all, Nijmegen. There are at least forty-three known names of Jews in Gelderland between 1410 and 1465. The large majority were involved in one way or another in moneylending. Two families are especially visible: those of Bonnom van Düren and Mozes van den Broek, from Grevenbroich or Broich near Jülich. Bonnom went to live in Düren in 1403, possibly accompanied by his father Vivus from Cologne. There he received a residence permit for eight years. In 1410, however, his name appeared for the first time in the schepenprotocollen (alderman registers) in Nijmegen. His name was recorded there another sixty times before 1431, almost always in connection with financial matters. In 1431 he and his wife Rachel and their two sons Liefmann and Anzom left for Huissen in the duchy of Cleves. He died soon afterwards, and his widow took over the business. In 1434 Rachel had to leave Huissen by order of the duke of Cleves, for unknown reasons. She returned to Nijmegen with her sons, where according to the schepenprotocollen she became involved in finance again. In that same year, 1410, Mozes van den Broek appeared before the Nijmegen aldermen for the first time to perform a financial transaction. From that time on, we find dozens of references to his name and those of his four sons Vivus, Mannus, Sauwel, and Salomon.

The Nijmegen *schepenprotocollen* offer helpful insights into the daily practice of Jewish moneylending at that time. Jewish lenders normally gave out small sums and accepted personal effects such as clothing, jewellery, or furniture as collateral. Such loans were usually private transactions that required no additional parties. If the term of the loan ended, usually after one or two weeks, and the debt had not been paid in

¹¹ L. Dequeker, Het Sacrament van Mirakel: Jodenhaat in de Middeleeuwen (Leuven, 2000), 21–4.

full, the lender was permitted to sell the pawned item. If the loan was a large sum or involved important individuals or organizations that could provide their own form of authentication—in those days, a seal—as security, there were two possibilities. Either the debtor would give his creditor a debt instrument bearing his seal, or else the two parties would appear before the municipal *schepenbank* (aldermen's court), which had criminal and voluntary jurisdiction, to perform the transaction before at least two aldermen, after which the aldermen would draw up a debt instrument bearing their seals or register the transaction in their *schepenprotocol* and then provide each of the two parties with a counterpart original.

Around 170 loans involving Jews were registered in the Nijmegen *schepenprotocollen* between 1410 and 1460. The debtors were almost all members of the Gelderland and Nijmegen elite. Most were short-term loans, usually for less than a year. The customary interest rate to be paid by the lender was around 43 per cent annually, a percentage also used elsewhere. Strikingly, the *schepenprotocollen* rarely mention interest. Apparently this was calculated into the principal to be repaid when the term of the loan ended, so that despised terms such as interest and usury could be avoided. Every registration of a loan included one or more forms of security intended to ensure repayment. The most typical form was a surety. Another form was a pledge that the debtor or one or more people indicated by the debtor would go into custody. They would then be held in an inn at their own expense until the debt was paid. In 1439, for example, the ducal forester Sweder van Sandwijck was required to stay in an inn for seven days with three other people and four horses because he had not been able to repay the Jew Molle in time. This period of custody cost him 61 guilders. Since he did not have the money, he went to a Jewish woman named Schonyn for a new loan.

This forester's accounts paint an appalling picture of the financial mismanagement at the duke's court. No sooner had one debt crisis been resolved than the next one presented itself. Van Sandwijck was constantly approaching Jewish lenders so that he could settle his debts with borrowed money. One noteworthy fact is that although the forester is perpetually complaining in his accounts of his dire predicament, he never blames the Jewish lenders for it. They are seen as guiltless, and he does not make a single hateful remark about grasping Jews. On the contrary, he knew that whenever he was short of funds he could always count on Jewish lenders.

Nijmegen never had a Jewish quarter. The *schepenprotocollen* report hundreds of transfers of real estate, but Jews were not involved in even one. They were allowed to rent property, however. The *schepenprotocollen* list twelve such contracts between 1411 and 1456 and reveal a distinct preference for 'prime locations'. Seven of the twelve rental properties were in Nijmegen's two most distinguished streets: Burchtstraat and Hezelstraat. They were rented by the Jewish men Bonnom (1413), Molijn (1421), Mullum (1426), and Manassus (1420) and the Jewish women Verhanna (before 1417), Penes (1438), and Peerlyn Nattansdochter (1457). Ysaac van Neuss (1411) lived in Vleeshouwerstraat

near Waaloever, Natuus (1456) in Begijnestraat, a side street of Hezelstraat, Guederaet (1430) near the parish church, and finally, Bonnom van Düren (1411) on Grote Markt (the main square).

In 1426 the brewer Johan van der Horst rented the back of a house to a Jew named Monnom 'for the use of all the Jews living in Nijmegen'. The building was in Woeziksgas, an alley between Houtstraat and Hezelstraat. The rental contract states that the alley had to be kept free of animals and rubbish at Johan's expense. The house was presumably used as a synagogue; in any case, the St Stephan parish church register mentions 'the Jewish school in Woesicksgas' in a note dating from around 1450. Apparently this alley soon became popularly known as *Jodengas*.

A rental contract entered into by a Jewish woman named Guederaet in 1430 includes an interesting clause. The owner gave her permission to install a *stuba* (bath) on the condition that she would restore the bathroom to its original state when the term of the contract ended. It is not clear whether this bath was intended for private use or as a ritual bath for the Jewish community.

One indication that the Jewish community had its own butcher can be found in a municipal ordinance of 1420, which forbade townspeople to buy more meat from the Jews than one quarter of a cow, half a calf, or half a sheep. They also had a cemetery of their own; in 1382 there is mention of a graveyard previously intended for Jews. It had probably been closed for many years after the mass murder of the Jews in Gelderland in 1349/50 and reopened when Jews returned in the 1380s. The cemetery was outside town in the Hoge Veld along Berg en Dalseweg. In 1596 the municipal authorities sold the cemetery to a Nijmegen burgher, after more than a century of disuse.

In view of the foregoing, it is reasonable to conclude that Nijmegen was the only city or town in the northern Netherlands with a flourishing and perhaps fully developed Jewish community (*kehilah*) in the first half of the fifteenth century. While Venlo, Den Bosch, and Doesburg each had a Jodenstraat as well, it would be rash to conclude from this toponym that those towns had fully developed Jewish communities. We know too little about the Jews who lived there to make such an inference. The only other two places, besides Nijmegen, that may have hosted a Jewish community are Maastricht and Roermond. As mentioned above, Maastricht once had a synagogue. Roermond even had a Jewish cemetery, although this 'Jewish churchyard' is mentioned in a written source for the first time at the late date of 1476, long after the city's Jewish residents had left.

Quiet Disappearance

Jews gradually disappeared from the streets of Nijmegen and other Gelderland towns in the fifteenth century, and would not return for some time. One reason for their departure was undoubtedly the mounting tension between Jews and non-Jews described in the final section of this chapter. This tension surfaced most clearly in Ger-

man towns with large Jewish populations. For instance, all Jews were required to leave the town of Trier in 1418. Six years later, Cologne was declared off-limits for Jews. Strikingly, these and other expulsions were initiatives not of the rulers, who as we have seen had assumed the role of protectors of the Jews, but of municipal authorities, who became increasingly ruthless in their pursuit of greater autonomy. Some of the expelled Jews must have gone east to Prussia, Poland, and Russia, where the feudal system was still firmly established and the influence of the municipal authorities limited, and others to Gelderland, where the arm of ducal authority was still strong enough to protect them, or so they believed. The end of the Jewish community in Cologne must have come as a great shock to all the Jews living in Gelderland, who from the start of Jewish settlement had been in very close contact with the large and tightly organized Jewish community in Cologne.

Jews from Cologne and elsewhere in the Rhineland who went to Gelderland must have noticed soon after arriving that there, too, relations between Jews and non-Jews were deteriorating. Jews accused of crimes could expect harsh treatment, and aggression against Jews was on the rise. In 1420 a Jew was burnt for secretly marrying the daughter of a nobleman from Culemborg. The girl, too, was put to the flames. And rightly so, according to Dirc Potter (c.1370–1428), the author of *Der minnen loep*, an early fifteenth-century collection of lessons on marriage and life for people of rank. A Christian who slept with a Jewish man or woman deserved the death penalty, he wrote, because that was a sin against nature.

The Jew arrested in 1439 on suspicion of sexual contact with several Arnhem girls was fortunate not to be sentenced by Potter's standard. Thanks to the intervention of his patron Arnold of Egmond, duke of Gelderland (r. 1423–65), he was released on condition that he leave Arnhem. In 1422 a resident of Zaltbommel was fined for stabbing a Jew with a knife. The following year, a group of men broke into Molle's house in Huissen, assaulted him and his family, and made off with a large sum of money. In 1449 Ysaac's home in Arnhem was ransacked. Evidence from two years later shows that the same Ysaac had been taken prisoner. This may have been connected to a visit to Arnhem by the papal legate Nicholas of Cusa (1401–64) in September 1451. In the Eusebiuskerk, a church there, he gave a fiery sermon holding out the prospect of a plenary indulgence to the faithful if they would oppose the usury of the Jews and stop turning a blind eye when a Jew walked the streets without wearing a *jodenteken* (Jewish mark).

Less than a week later a letter from the city authorities, read in all the Arnhem churches, set out a number of far-reaching anti-Jewish measures. Jews were no longer permitted to lend money in return for pawned objects or for interest. They had one

¹² H. van Wijn, 'Iets nopens de vroegere Geschiedenis der Jooden hier te lande', *Huiszittend Leeven*, 1 (Amsterdam, 1801), 79–115: 108.

¹³ H. D. J. van Schevichaven, 'Een joodsche Don Juan', *Bijdragen en Mededeelingen Gelre*, 14 (1911), 317–18.

year to wrap up any business in progress. Pawned items that had not been redeemed by then would fall into the possession of the city. At that same time, the authorities would determine which Jews were able earn an honest living. Anyone who could not demonstrably do so would have to leave. Furthermore, all Jews had to have yellow marks clearly visible on their outer garments. Whoever refused would be banned. And finally, the meat sold by Jewish butchers had to be marked with a yellow flag so that it would be recognizable as Jewish meat. The requirement for Jews to wear a distinguishing mark dates from 1215, when the Fourth Lateran Council introduced it at the urging of Pope Innocent III (r. 1198–1216). According to the pope, Christians had too often had sexual intercourse with Jewish men or women because the latter had been able to conceal their Jewish identity.

Similarly, various rabbinical texts warned against excessive contact, sexual or otherwise, between the two groups, a sign that such contact took place more often than was considered acceptable. The pope was happy to leave the practical details of the Jewish dress code to the local authorities. This accounts for the differences from place to place. Jews in England had to wear a yellow badge in the form of the two stone tablets of Moses, symbolizing the Old Testament. In France, Jews were required to wear a round, yellow badge at chest height, perhaps as an allusion to the 30 pieces of silver for which Judas had betrayed Jesus. Jews in the Holy Roman Empire, in contrast, were for many years required to wear a pointed, conical red hat ('jodenhoed'). It was not until the fifteenth century that a yellow badge was introduced there. The choice of the colour yellow was an obvious one. In the Middle Ages, yellow was associated with uncleanliness. Lepers had to wear similar yellow badges to warn the people around them that an unclean person was approaching.

In the Netherlands, Arnhem is the only place where a specific dress code for Jews is known to us today. Yet there is evidence that Jews in other places also wore badges. In 1456 the town leaders of Venlo met with the duke to discuss how to make their Jews wear yellow badges. Three years later, the Tiel authorities issued an ordinance prohibiting the provision or rental of accommodation to a Jew who did not wear such a badge. Jews in Nijmegen were also subject to this discriminatory measure, according to a much later source. In 1544–5, the Nijmegen city authorities became embroiled in a war of words with Mary of Hungary, governor of the Netherlands, after she ordered the city to send away several Jews who had recently received permission from the city authorities to settle there. In response to this affair, the burgrave of Nijmegen, a senior official representing seigneurial authority in the city, wrote Mary a letter containing a brief account of the history of the Jewish presence in Nijmegen. He mentioned in that letter that Jews and townspeople had once been on friendly terms. But he added

¹⁴ For images of the *Judenhut* and yellow badges, see H. Schreckenberg, *The Jews in Christian Art: An Illustrated History* (New York, 1996).

(without providing further details) that ever since Jews had been required to wear badges, the groups had become estranged.¹⁵

As noted above, the loss of Cologne as a regional centre of Jewish life, along with the hostility of the general population, must have prompted many Jews to leave Gelderland. Furthermore, in this same period ducal authority was compromised by dynastic conflicts within the ducal family, and Jews could therefore no longer count on the support of their protector. Mentions of Jews in the Nijmegen schepenprotocollen fall off rapidly after 1450. The last mention of Jews in Roermond dates from 1446 and that in Venlo from 1455, when a ducal official visited the city to reclaim a golden tankard from a Jew there. Jews were last reported in Arnhem in 1468, in connection with the trial of several people who had stolen a tin flask from a 'Jewish house'. In 1488 Gottschalck Salomonszoon and Moyses Goltsmyt left Nijmegen, possibly expelled, seven years after the two of them had moved to the city. In 1473 this Gottschalck and his father Salomon had received a permit from John I, duke of Cleves (r. 1448-81), to settle in Huissen on the condition that they not practise any form of usury. They were, however, allowed to bury deceased family members in the Jewish cemetery in Nijmegen or Arnhem. On leaving Nijmegen, Gottschalck and Moyses returned to Huissen, where Duke John permitted them to remain for three years. Nothing is known about their lives there. In fact, their disappearance brings an end to the history of the Jews in the Netherlands in the Middle Ages. Large-scale forced expulsions such as took place in the surrounding countries are not known to have taken place in the Netherlands. Instead, the Jews vanished bit by bit from the historical record because the people around them turned against them. They feared for their lives, could no longer rely on ducal protection, and were left with almost no way of earning a living.

Let me close this section with a few remarks about the other provinces of the northern Netherlands. In the county of Holland, Zeeland, and West Friesland, the wealthiest and most powerful province, Jews played hardly any significant role in the Middle Ages. The dukes borrowed mainly from Lombards (pawnbrokers), to whom they had granted a monopoly on moneylending. Likewise, towns and cities made little use of Jewish moneylenders. Any mentions of Jews tend to relate to them being rewarded in some way for agreeing to be baptized. For example, Albert I, count of Holland, Zeeland, and West Friesland (r. 1358–1404), gave a little money to two converted Jewish women in 1393 and 1394. Four years later, a Jewish man and woman were baptized in the Grote Kerk in The Hague in Count Albert's presence. For the occasion, they wore green garments that were a gift from the duke. After the ceremony, they received a second set of clothes.

The bishops of Utrecht sometimes rewarded conversion in similar ways. In the early fifteenth century, for instance, the bishop Rudolf van Diepholt (r. 1423–55) decided to help the Jew Johannes, who had fallen into poverty but liberated himself from the

¹⁵ J. S. van Veen, 'Joden te Nijmegen', Bijdragen en Mededeelingen Gelre, 10 (1907), 47–9, 52.

misapprehensions of his Jewish ancestors, to obtain alms. A short time afterwards, this same bishop confirmed all the letters of indulgence previously granted to baptized Jews and even granted a forty-day indulgence to anyone who gave baptized Jews financial assistance. It will come as no surprise that this appeal to Christian charity on behalf of the new believers encouraged fraud. There are many known instances of men and women posing as converted Jews for easy money.¹⁶

The situation in the Oversticht (Drenthe and Overijssel) and the Nedersticht (the city and present-day province of Utrecht) is less clear. It seems that Jews were active in Zwolle only in the first half of the fifteenth century. In 1408 an inhabitant of Zwolle was summoned to court in a case against a Jew. In 1416 a Jewish woman named Beerte took Coenraad van Bredebroeck to court because of a 20-guilder debt. Then there is nothing until 1490, when Zwolle's municipal leaders prohibited anyone from trading with or borrowing from Jews or offering Jews anything to eat or drink. The previous year, the authorities in Kampen had taken a similar measure and warned a woman to stop acting as an intermediary between townspeople and Jews.

Outside the city of Utrecht, there are no traces of Jews in the Nedersticht at that time. There is a mention in 1438 of a *jodenrye*, an alley behind Bakkerstraat in the heart of the old city. Whether any Jews actually lived there is unclear. As in Holland, the Lombards also played a key role in Utrecht. In the interest of good relations with them, the bishop Arnold of Horne (r. 1371–8) declared in 1376 that no Lombard residing in Utrecht could be deemed a usurer.

In 1444 the Utrecht authorities prohibited Jews from entering the city, on pain of imprisonment and confiscation of their goods. Whether the city authorities were acting at the instigation of the Lombards is difficult to say. In 1485, under pressure from the guilds, they felt it necessary to reiterate this prohibition, adding the rationale that the Jews conducted themselves improperly and were dishonest traders. Again, it is unclear whether this was a precautionary measure or whether the presence of Jews formed an actual threat to the people of Utrecht at the time. The latter seems improbable, since Jews in other places were leaving around that time because of the increasing difficulty of earning a living. The only Jew we can identify by name in the city of Utrecht in this period is Meyer the Jew, a physician. In June 1477, he received permission from the municipality to settle in the city for three months. His brief stay may have been related to the gout then troubling the bishop, David of Burgundy. 17

¹⁶ Cluse, Studien, 83 n. 473.

¹⁷ C. M. Stutvoet-Joanknecht, 'Een zeldzaam teken van begrip voor het jodendom in de Noordelijke Nederlanden in de vijftiende eeuw', in N. Lethinck and J. J. van Moolenbroek (eds.), *In de schaduw van de eeuwigheid: Tien studies over religie en samenleving in laatmiddeleeuws Nederland aangeboden aan prof. dr. A. H. Bredero* (Utrecht, 1986), 87–108: 98. See Cluse, *Studien*, 111–16, for other examples of Jewish physicians who worked at the courts of sovereigns.

Group Image

It is a well-established fact that in the Middle Ages Jews were described in almost exclusively negative terms in writing (and undoubtedly in speech), not only in the Netherlands but throughout the European Christian world. The roots and wellsprings of this widespread hostility, sometimes called antisemitism, have been described in detail. Some point an accusing finger at the Church, assigning it most of the blame. Others take a more nuanced position, considering political, socio-economic, cultural, and psychological factors in their explanations. One central question is to what extent there was mutual influence between popular culture and the cultural and intellectual elite—the clergy until the twelfth century and from then on, to a growing extent, the urban elite as well.

Without a doubt, the Church played a substantial role in shaping the image of the Jews, drawing mainly on the Old and New Testaments and the writings of the Church Fathers. According to Church ideology, God had first revealed himself to the people of Israel, making them his chosen people with the task of paving the way for Christianity. But in refusing to acknowledge Jesus Christ as the messiah and Son of God, sent to earth by his father to save both the Jews and the heathens from eternal suffering in hell, even though the prophets had predicted his coming, and by refusing to accept that the Old Covenant had been replaced by a New Covenant and that Jewish law had been superseded and lost its authority, they had forfeited their privileged position in salvation history. Unfortunately, the Jews refused to face up to their historic error and went on looking forward, blindly and foolishly, to the coming of the messiah.

But what was far worse was that they had murdered God himself by betraying Jesus with the kiss of Judas and turning him over to the Roman authorities, specifically Pontius Pilate. This guilt was everlasting, because during the trial of Jesus they had shouted to Pilate, 'Crucify him', and 'His blood be on us, and on our children' (Matthew 27: 25). Despite having every justification, God had not destroyed the Jewish people—but he had taken vengeance. After the Romans, acting as unwitting vehicles of God's will, had conquered Jerusalem in the year 70 and destroyed the Temple, the heart of Judaism, as punishment for what the Jews had done to Jesus, God had caused the Jews to be scattered all over the world so that their presence would attest to their blindness and the truth of the New Covenant.

A sixteenth-century chapbook, *De destructie van Jherusalem*, puts it in somewhat simpler terms. After Emperor Vespasian (r. 69–79) had been cured of leprosy by Veronica's veil, which preserved an image of the face of Christ on his way to Calvary, he decided to punish Christ's murderers by destroying the Temple. After the capture of Jerusalem, the Jews were discovered to have swallowed all their gold and silver. So the Romans had tens of thousands of Jews killed and slit open so that their valuables could be removed. The survivors were put on ships and driven out to sea. 'But Our Lord did

not let them drown there, because he wanted them to remain in the world in commemoration of his Passion.' The Church concluded therefore that the Jews should not be killed, but had to be endured and tolerated—all the more because the apostle Paul (c.3-64 or 67) in his letter to the Romans (II: 26) had written that when Christ returned to earth at the end of days, the scales would fall from the eyes of the Jews and they would convert and earn a place in heaven after all. This point of view was endorsed by the influential Church Father Augustine (354-430) and, thanks in part to him, has become a staple of Christian thought about the Jewish people's right to exist after the coming of Jesus the messiah. One very early example of this point of view in Middle Dutch literature can be found in the Liber floridus ('Book of Flowers'), written around 1120 by Lambert, canon of Saint-Omer (c.1070-?).18 This remarkable collection contains three disputations and a few stories in which Jews play a role. For example, Lambert tells a story about the fall of Jerusalem. After the city was captured, the Romans murdered a large number of Jewish men. The others were castrated. In desperation, the Jewish women took Vandals and Huns as husbands. Lambert concludes that the surviving Jewish people may no longer call themselves descendants of Abraham, but are in fact barbarians.

In a story of the Apocalypse, Lambert describes how the Jewish people greet the Antichrist with cheers and pay homage to him as the messiah. In his telling, their saviour is killed by Christ himself on the Mount of Olives, yet the Jews refuse to acknowledge his death. They mourn beside his body for three days, certain that on the third day he will rise from the dead. Of course, nothing happens on that day, and the Jews realize that they were misled. They all have themselves baptized, after which Christ accepts them into heaven, just as Paul had prophesied. Lambertus's Liber floridus, which was widely distributed in the Netherlands, is also of special interest for two miniatures that encapsulate how Lambert and many others saw the Jews. The first illustration shows two trees that share the same roots but have grown apart. One tree, the good one, represents the community of the faithful, the Ecclesia (the Church). This tree bears many branches, leaves, and fruits, in which numerous female figures are depicted, symbolizing Christian virtues. The other tree, the bad one, represents Judaism, the Synagoga. It is withered and full of vices, such as hostility, stinginess, and deceit. In the trunk of the tree there are two axes. Lambert may have wished to suggest that Judaism could in his opinion justifiably be destroyed, by allusion to the Gospel of Luke, chapter 3, in which John the Baptist announces the coming Judgement to his audience, saying: 'And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.'

The second miniature has an impressive figure of Christ in the centre, flanked by

¹⁸ J. Tollebeek, "Arbor Mala": Het anti-judaïsme van Lambertus van Sint-Omaars', *StR* 20 (1986), 1–33. The opposition between Synagoga and Ecclesia was a frequent subject in art. See e.g. W. Seiferth, *Synagoge und Kirche im Mittelalter* (Munich, 1964) and B. Blumenkrantz, *Le Juif médiéval au miroir de l'art chrétien* (Paris, 1966).

two women (PLATE 3). The woman on Christ's right symbolizes Ecclesia, the one on his left Synagoga. Lady Ecclesia wears a crown, and Christ lays his hand affectionately on her head. She holds a victory banner in one hand and a chalice in the other, a reference to the chalice in the rite of the Eucharist in which wine transforms into the precious blood spilled by Jesus on the cross to save humanity. In contrast, Lady Synagoga wears no crown. Her banner is broken, and Christ is pushing her away. Next to her, hell is depicted in the form of a dragon's gaping maw.

The famous altarpiece in St Bavo's Cathedral in Ghent depicting the adoration of the Lamb of God, painted in 1432 by the brothers Jan and Hubert van Eyck, also depicts the moment when the Jews are finally saved. In the central panel, we see the Lamb of God surrounded by groups of worshippers. To the left of the Lamb is a large group of dignitaries, and to the right a group of Jews, including Zachary, his son John the Baptist, and the Christian believer Simeon, three Jews who had recognized Jesus as the messiah. Three other Jews each hold a branch, from a lemon, a willow, and a myrtle tree. Branches like these were and are used, along with palm fronds, in celebrating the harvest festival of Sukkot, which commemorates the forty-year period of wandering the desert and the arrival in the promised land of Canaan. By placing the Jews close to the Lamb of God and depicting them with such branches, the Van Eyck brothers clearly asserted that one day the Jews would be admitted to the promised land, not of Israel, but of heaven.¹⁹

Disputations

Allowing the Jewish people to go on existing was risky, however, since Christians might come under the influence of the Jewish faith. The Church tried to prevent that by means of disputations. In these fictional dialogues between a Jew and a Christian, each party tries to convince the other of the truth of his own religious beliefs. This leads to discussions of all sorts of sensitive religious topics, such as the status of the Torah (the first five books of the Old Testament, which form the basis of the Jewish faith and Jewish law), the assumption of human form by God the Son, Mary's virginity, Christ's resurrection, the Trinity, and the transubstantiation of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ.

In one early example of this type of polemic from the Netherlands, the two fictional debaters are Wecelinus, a priest who has converted to Judaism, and a man named Hendrik. This dialogue was included by the Benedictine monk Alpert of Metz in his chronicle *De diversitate temporum* ('On the Diverse Events of This Time') from the first quarter of the eleventh century. Wecelinus tries to defend his new-found faith mainly by ridiculing Christ's incarnation as a man, and the Trinity. He argues that since

¹⁹ L. Dequeker, 'Jewish Symbolism in the Ghent Altarpiece of Jan van Eyck (1432)', *Dutch Jewish History*, 1 (Tel Aviv, 1982), 347–62.

God is the eternal, unchanging One Being, he can never be divided into three parts, let alone take on a form that is changeable and mortal. Then Hendrik speaks, rebutting Wecelinus's arguments one by one.²⁰

The need to defend Christianity against Judaism was felt for a long time. As late as 1360 or thereabouts, for instance, the monk Gillis de Wevel in Bruges used his life of Amand, a seventh-century Flemish saint, to emphasize the falsity of the Jewish faith. He describes how Amand, during his missionary work, was confronted by Jews who questioned Mary's virginity. The local bishop then organized a debate between Amand and four Jewish sages. The most prominent audience member was the Frankish king Dagobert, who despite the large sums of money he received from Jews as tribute, nevertheless hoped that they would convert. Amand won the debate, obviously, in part by proving that Mary's virginity had been prefigured in the Old Testament. The Jews were convinced, and they converted.²¹

Miracle Stories and Exempla

To commoners, most of whom were illiterate, such theological debates must have been largely incomprehensible. To familiarize them with Christian doctrines, encourage them to reflect on their moral conduct, and warn them of the threats to their salvation, the Church used saints' lives, miracle stories, and exempla, brief instructional tales with clear morals. Such stories, sometimes original and sometimes adapted from earlier tales, were often gathered in miracle books or collections of exempla, in which monks and parish clergy could find examples for their sermons.

The best-known and most widely used collections, in the Netherlands and elsewhere, were the *Dialogus miraculorum* ('Dialogue on Miracles') dating from around 1220, compiled by the Cistercian monk Caesarius of Heisterbach (*c.*1180–*c.*1240), the *Bonum universale de apibus* (known as the 'Book of Bees') by the Dominican Thomas of Cantimpré (1201–72), written in the 1260s, and the *Legenda Aurea* ('Golden Legend') by another Dominican, Jacobus de Voragine (1228–98), dating from 1260. It is no coincidence that the three authors were monks or friars. From the twelfth century onwards, the Church was confronted with troublesome lay movements, such as the Beguines, and heretical movements such as the Waldensians and Cathars. This compelled it to put greater effort into *cura animarum*, pastoral care. A leading role in this effort was played by the religious orders, especially the Franciscans and Dominicans, both founded in the early thirteenth century. Friars in these orders, known as mendicants because they were generally dependent on begging for alms, devoted themselves mainly to preaching, often using books of miracles and collections of exempla.

²⁰ A. van Metz, Gebeurtenissen van deze tijd en een fragment over bisschop Diederik I van Metz, ed. H. Van Rij and A. Sapir-Abulafia (Amsterdam, 1980), 89–103.

²¹ Leven van Sint Amand, patroon der Nederlanden: Dichtstuk der XIVe eeuw, ed. P. Blommaert (Ghent, 1843).

Dozens of stories included Jews as characters. These Jews almost always convert after a miracle is performed, are put to death for ridiculing or destroying pictures or sculptures of Jesus or Mary, or cling to their absurd belief in a future messiah against their better judgement. In that last category, Caesarius of Heisterbach gives the following example. A Christian living in Worms had lain with a Jewish girl, leaving her with an unwanted pregnancy. To avoid a scandal, the two of them came up with a ruse. One night he hid in the shadows under the window of the girl's parents' bedroom and said, disguising his voice: 'O ye righteous people, be of good cheer, for your virgin daughter has been granted a son who shall become a redeemer of your people of Israel. The child who shall be born of her virginal body is the messiah you have awaited.' Assuming that an angel had spoken these words, the parents believed the joyous message, because there had once been a prophecy that the Jewish messiah would be born in Worms. When the girl was about to give birth, her parents invited all the Jews in the area to witness the blessed event. And lo, the virgin brought a child into the world, 'yet not a messiah' but a girl. The furious Jews killed the baby by slamming it into a wall.

In countless exempla, a central role is reserved for the Virgin Mary, whose cult was promoted by the Church from the thirteenth century onwards. These stories depict a Mary who sometimes inflicts gruesome punishments on Jews for the injustice they did to her and her son, and sometimes takes pity on Jews who have seen the error of their ways or who are weak or vulnerable, especially women and children. Let us look at a couple of examples. Some children are playing on the beach. They untie a boat and go out to sea. A 'Jew boy' is allowed to come along. When darkness falls they head for home but leave the boy behind. It starts to rain. Suddenly Mary appears and asks the child: 'Why are you crying?' The boy says: 'I am so alone, I'm cold, and I'm afraid of dying.' Mary wraps her cloak around the child and carries him with her. Then she asks: 'Would you like me to be your mother?' 'Yes', says the child, 'I have never seen a more beautiful mother than you.' Then Mary replies: 'From this time on, I will be your mother and you my child, but you will have to obey me and live according to your Saviour's will.' Mary then brings the boy to a monastery, where he grows up to be a devout monk.

Another exemplum describes how Mary helps a Jew taken captive by a band of robbers to escape. She takes him on a tour of hell, showing him what his fate will be if he clings to his false beliefs. Then she takes him to heaven and promises him a place there if he becomes a Christian. Without a moment's hesitation, the Jew has himself baptized and changes his name from Jacob to John. Another exemplum, intended to teach the common people the puzzling doctrine of Mary's virginity, tells of a Jew who sees an image of Mary with one breast issuing milk, a sign that she bore children and became a mother, and the other breast oil, the symbol of virginity. Upon witnessing this miracle, the Jew sees the error of his ways and converts.

Another story, of a completely different variety, is that of the desecration of an image of Mary in the Cistercian monastery of Cambron in Hainaut. According to this story, which was disseminated widely in the Netherlands, the Jew Guillaume, who had converted to Christianity under false pretences not long before, broke into the refectory of the monastery, where there was an image of Mary on the wall. After spitting on it and exposing his rear end to it, he stabbed it with a knife. The statue immediately began bleeding, upon which the Jew fled. Soon afterwards, Mary appeared in a dream to an elderly smith who had been lame and bedridden for years. She ordered him to stand and avenge her by challenging the Jew to trial by single combat with staves. He obeyed, and lo and behold, to the surprise of the onlookers, the smith brought the Jew to his knees, thus proving his guilt. The Jew was suspended by his feet and roasted over a fire, after which his dead body was torn to shreds by two ferocious, ravening dogs. The tale of the miracle of Cambron spread like wildfire, and before long a fully-fledged cult of Mary had sprung up in Cambron, to the delight of the monks and the locals.

It would be wrong to think that the mendicants who spread these stories sought to provoke hatred of the Jews, as some historians have claimed. Their main objective was didactic; they wished to familiarize the common folk with Christian teachings. Jews served as convenient characters in their examples. This was partly because their beliefs resembled those of Christianity in many ways but departed from it with respect to a few crucial articles of faith. Many stories ended with conversion: the Jew or Jews in question repented and acknowledged that Christianity was the only true religion.

Even the Cambron story was probably not chiefly intended to inflame anti-Jewish feelings. It is easy to imagine that the monks of Cambron invented, or embellished, the image desecration story for financial gain, to attract pilgrims, and that they used a Jew to make their tale sound more plausible. If this is the case, the monks were not being especially original. The maltreatment of crosses and images of Mary by Jews was a familiar, age-old motif going back as far as the eighth century, when there was a fierce struggle in the Byzantine empire between iconodules (image worshippers) and iconoclasts (image destroyers). To change the minds of their opponents, the iconodules used miracle stories to prove the miraculous power that emanated from images of the cross.

The Jews who figured in these stories were intended merely to make them more persuasive, as characters who were not only anti-Christian by nature but also opposed to every form of image worship. If even *they* had to admit that they were wrong, then image worship must have meaning and significance.²²

Host Desecration

If these miracle tales and exempla about Jews seemed fairly innocent and sometimes even entertaining—take, for example, the story of the supposed messiah—other stories

²² Dequeker, Het Sacrament van Mirakel, 10.

circulated from the thirteenth century onwards that formed a genuine threat to the Jews: stories of host desecration, of their brutality to Christ during his Passion, and of the ritual slaughter of Christian children and conspiracy with the devil.

The stories of host desecration were generally stereotypical in structure. A few Jews were said to have come up with the plan to murder Jesus Christ a second time. So they persuaded a Christian to steal one or more consecrated hosts. Then the Jews met on Good Friday to abuse the host. They eventually stabbed it with a knife, whereupon it began to bleed. The crime became public knowledge, and the people murdered all the Jews they could lay their hands on. The best-known host desecration in the Netherlands was said to have taken place in Brussels in 1370. According to the story, the Jews living there had prevailed upon a Jew who had converted to Christianity under false pretences to steal a few consecrated hosts from the tabernacle in St Catherine's Chapel. The Jews assembled on Good Friday and, inspired by the devil, began to desecrate the hosts. When the hosts started to bleed, the Jews fell into a stupor. When they had recovered, they asked Katharina, a converted Jewish woman, to take the hosts to Cologne. The young woman promised she would, but later felt remorse and made a full confession to the chapel priest. All the Jews in Brussels and Leuven were then imprisoned, interrogated, and found guilty, and in the end they were 'all burnt to ashes, those nasty, evil Jews, as they merited and deserved'. ²³ After the flames of the pyre were put out, the hosts were divided between St Catherine's Chapel and the Church of St Gudula.

In 1530, when Brussels was spared from a bubonic plague epidemic, an annual procession was organized in gratitude, to celebrate the 'Sacrament of Miracles'. Soon afterwards, four stained glass windows depicting the supposed events of 1370 were placed in the sacramental chapel of the Cathedral of St Gudula that had been built especially for the hosts. In 1977, after much controversy, a bronze plaque was placed in the cathedral that questions the accuracy of the story of the Sacrament of Miracles. What really happened in 1370 remains unclear. The suspicion is that some inhabitants of Brussels stole the golden cup containing the hosts and went to the Jews to pawn it. Katharina's role is also extremely questionable. Did she make up the story to clear herself of any involvement, or for financial gain? Did the clergy of St Catherine's Chapel and the Church of St Gudula seize upon the theft as an opportunity to make their chapel and church a place of pilgrimage, by spreading the story of the supposed host desecration? Or did they perhaps invent the story themselves? Such questions persist.²⁴

There is only one surviving story from the northern Netherlands of host desecration involving Jews. Three Jews are said to have stolen a silver ciborium holding consecrated hosts from the Church of St Willibrord in Groningen. Soon after this theft, the

²³ Cluse, Studien, 340–1; R. Harper, Als God met ons is . . . Jacob van Maerlant en de vijanden van het christelijk geloof (Amsterdam, 1998), 144–5.

²⁴ Dequeker, Het Sacrament van Mirakel, and Cluse, Studien, 284–95.

hosts were found in a ditch in Solwerd, a village near Appingedam, because the water in the ditch was giving off a strange, bright white light. In commemoration of this miracle, a sacrament chapel with a well was built there. It quickly became a pilgrimage site. In 1682 the well was filled following complaints of superstitious practices there.²⁵

Again, the question arises of whether these host stories were deliberate attempts to discriminate against Jews or whether they were used, because of the bad reputation of the Jews, to serve a higher purpose. In the twelfth century, theologians and Church leaders fiercely debated whether, in the rite of the Eucharist, the bread (host) and wine—consecrated by the priest with the words 'Hoc est enim Corpus meum' ('For this is my body') and 'Hic est calix Sanguinis mei novi et aeterni testamenti, qui vobis et pro multis effundetur in remissionem peccatorum' ('For this is the chalice of my Blood, of the new and eternal covenant, which will be poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins')—truly change into the physical body and blood of Christ (transubstantiation), or only figuratively transform (consubstantiation). At the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215, the conflict was settled and transubstantiation became Church doctrine. To explain this abstruse theological question to the faithful, the Church disseminated stories about hosts that bled when they were desecrated, stories perhaps also consciously or unconsciously intended to turn the supposed places of such desecration into pilgrimage sites. But there is no hard evidence of this in most cases. One exception is the legend of the three good Fridays, a clear case of manipulation and deceit intended to burnish the reputation of the annual Procession of the Holy Blood in Bruges. During this procession, reported for the first time in 1256, a small flask containing a few drops of blood purportedly shed by Christ on the cross is displayed to the onlookers. Thierry of Alsace, Count of Flanders (r. 1128-68), is traditionally said to have brought back the blood from Jerusalem when he returned from the Second Crusade in 1150, and to have given it a place in the Chapel of St Basil in Bruges. According to the story of the three good Fridays, a Jew once happened to discover that a Christian who fasts and spends extra time in prayer on three particular Fridays will be rewarded by God. Since most Christians were unaware of this fact, he decided to keep his discovery secret, but his Christian maid found out anyway. The Jew flew into a rage, murdering the girl and hiding her body in a cellar. During the procession, cries were heard from the Jew's house. The cellar was broken open, and the body, still bleeding, was discovered. The girl miraculously came back to life, told the whole story, confessed, received the last rites, and died in divine bliss. The original story, which must date from the late thirteenth century, has not been preserved, but we do have a copy in a manuscript that was kept in a monastery in east Flanders. The copyist responsible for that version can be seen to have deliberately altered the original so that the discovery of the body coincided with the annual procession of the blood in Bruges in May.²⁶

²⁵ J. H. de Veij-Mestdagh, Joden in Noord-Oost Groningen (Groningen, 1980), 5.

²⁶ M. Hogenhout-Mulder, 'De legende van de drie gouden vrijdagen', *Voortgang*, 6 (1985), 3–47.

Ritual Murder and Blood Accusation

The common theme linking ritual slaughter and host desecration is blood, which was thought to possess great magical power. The scores of tales of ritual murder, mostly from German-speaking countries, were modelled on the twelfth-century story of the 12-year-old William of Norwich. According to that story, the young boy was taken captive by Jews through trickery on the day before Pesach (Passover) in 1144. The next day his body was found in the house of the wealthy Jew Eleazar; he had been tortured, stabbed in his left side, and then crucified. After this terrible crime came to light, a converted Jew revealed that the Jews had done it, because they believed the only way they could return to the promised land was by spilling the blood of innocent children. For this reason, the chief rabbis met secretly in Narbonne every year to draw lots to pick the town in which a Christian child would be sacrificed. In 1144 the English town of Norwich had been chosen.

In the years that followed, the blood accusation was gradually embellished with further details and expanded into a stereotypical story (PLATE 4).²⁷ The murder, plotted well in advance, generally takes place in secret on Good Friday, because on that day the Jews were seized by an uncontrollable urge to re-enact the murder of Christ—who had been sacrificed like an innocent Easter lamb and spilled his blood on the cross—by spilling the blood of a young, innocent child. At the same time, the Jews were said to need the blood for all sorts of magical and ritual purposes, varying from making amulets, love philtres, and magical powders to baking matzos, anointing rabbis, driving out their usual stench, and stopping epileptic attacks or bleeding during circumcision, menstruation, and the terrible bleeding spells that allegedly afflicted Jewish men.

There is only one known story from the Netherlands that could be suggestive of ritual murder. In 1308, if we are to believe the anonymous early fourteenth-century chronicler, the inhabitants of Tienen found a woman's body. A rumour was soon going about that the Jews had murdered her after torturing her. The author says nothing about how or why this might have happened. The Jews managed to avoid a popular tribunal by paying off their persecutors. But as if by a miracle of God, crusaders arrived and killed all the Jews they could find.

This story may be related to the failed crusade of 1308–9 called for by Pope Clement V. The response was lukewarm among the political and military elite, who long before had lost their faith in such expeditions. But thousands of people from humble backgrounds, who had little to lose, heeded the pope's summons. In various places, including the Netherlands, they gathered to journey onwards to the Mediterranean together. Along the way, one group laid siege to Born Castle near Sittard, where according to a chronicle written in Tiel in the second half of the fourteenth century, around one

²⁷ R. Po-chia Hsia, *The Myth of Ritual Murder: Jews and Magic in Reformation Germany* (New Haven, 1988), I–I3.

hundred Jews had taken refuge. Not one of them survived the capture of the castle. Another group forced the Jews in Leuven to choose: baptism or burning. In reaction, the surviving Jews in Brabant went to their protector, Duke John II. He allowed them to use his castle in Genappe, south of Brussels. When the 'crusaders' had the audacity to attack this castle, the duke sent an army to drive them away.

As mentioned, there are no known tales from the Netherlands describing ritual murders by Jews, aside from the vague story about Tienen. Yet wandering mendicants in the Low Countries did circulate stories about such murders, supposedly committed elsewhere. The best known was the story of Werner, a child cast out by his parents. Werner worked for a Jew in Oberwesel, near Koblenz, who in 1287 instructed him to steal a host. When Werner refused, he was seized and stabbed to death by Jews who had gathered in the house of Werner's master Ysaac to celebrate Pesach and needed blood for their Pesach bread. Soon afterwards the 16-year-old boy's lifeless body was found in Bacharach, where a pilgrimage chapel was founded in his memory. Before long, Werner was venerated as a saint by the common people, and 19 April was later declared his memorial day. In the diocese of Trier, this remained a recognized holiday until 1963.

In *Bonum universale de apibus*, Thomas of Cantimpré tells yet another story, which he says must be true because he heard it from two Dominicans. In 1267 an evil woman in Pforzheim, Germany, had sold a 7-year-old orphan girl to the Jews. They stabbed the child to death, carefully collected her blood, and then hid the body under a stone in a river. A few days later, fishermen discovered the body sitting upright in the water, one arm raised to the sky as if calling for vengeance. They brought it into town, and when the Jews there were confronted with it, it spontaneously began to bleed afresh. This proved their guilt, and they were burnt to death. One of the reasons the Jews had murdered the girl, according to Thomas, was that they needed a child's blood to be cured of their own bleeding. Because their ancestors had cried, 'His blood be on us, and on our children', God had punished Jewish men by making their anuses bleed, just as He had punished Eve and all women after her with menstrual bleeding as retribution for the Fall of Man.

The same explanation of the need for the blood of innocent children is given by the author of the late medieval *Tractaet over de Passie* ('Treatise on the Passion'), written in the vernacular. He adds that the Jews meet every year, in the deepest secrecy, to decide who must buy or steal a Christian child, and where, to supply them with curative blood. It is worth reflecting on the fact that this story is told in a treatise devoted to Christ's Passion. Historians have described the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries as an age of discontent. The many changes resulting from the rise of towns and a money economy created a sense of insecurity. Meanwhile, many people were losing confidence in the Church, because it became more manifestly obvious around this time that its main objectives were political power and financial gain, rather than the salvation of the faithful. This discontent formed fertile soil for a variety of lay religious movements

that rejected this corrupt world. One prominent example was the *Devotio Moderna* ('Modern Devotion'), founded by Geert Groote (1340–84) of Deventer. To Groote and his followers, the ideal was to live one's life entirely in imitation of Jesus Christ (*Imitatio Christi*). Groote's favourite theme was the suffering, or Passion, of Christ, who had endured terrible pain out of love for humanity. It should be added that Groote never showed any overt hostility towards Jews, and neither he nor his followers ever called for Jews to be expelled or massacred. But partly under the influence of Groote and his movement, a new literary genre emerged: the Passion story. Such tales described Christ's trial and crucifixion in ever more gruesome detail, and the logical result was that over time their portrayal of the Jews, who were seen as having the death of Christ on their conscience, grew ever more cruel and extreme, as if they were mad, rabid dogs.

Many historians have concluded that such Passion stories were intended to malign the Jews and provide the secular authorities with a pretext for getting rid of them, but this appears doubtful. It is much more probable that these stories reflect the growing engagement of many Christians with Christ's suffering.

Usury and Conspiracy with the Devil

That does not change the fact that these many stories certainly played a role in turning the Christian community decisively against the Jews. This is shown in part by the fact that, in the late Middle Ages, Jews were accused not only of the familiar crimes but also of usury on an unprecedented scale and of conspiracy with the devil. With a few exceptions—such as the claims of King Louis IX and of Henry III, duke of Brabant—the various accusations levelled at the Jews had never included explicit allegations of usury. Apparently, borrowing from Jews had been regarded as a perfectly ordinary part of life. From the fourteenth century onwards, that changed. The criticism swelled to a climax in the fifteenth century, when the Jews were accused of scandalously exploiting other people's suffering and seeking to ruin helpless people with their unfair financial practices. Similar criticisms were directed at feudal lords, since they were seen as 'friends of the Jews' who protected them for financial reasons, thus perpetuating their usurious practices.

Some scholars have explained this growing criticism of the Jews' 'core business' by reference to changing economic structures in the late Middle Ages, when new forms of credit—such as annuities (perpetual or redeemable) and rent charges—circumvented the Church's prohibition on usury. Rapid economic growth, combined with the accumulation of surplus money and a rising demand for money, brought together Christian financiers and would-be borrowers, who could find each other more easily thanks to these new methods of finance. Jewish creditors were no longer needed and

²⁸ Cluse, Studien, 172.

were in fact seen as rivals. According to this line of argument, Christian lenders began to accuse their Jewish counterparts of usury, playing on anti-Jewish sentiment in the hope of eliminating the competition. And their strategy succeeded.

Others regard this monocausal explanation as too simplistic. At the same time as these accusations of usury, another allegation was gaining ground: namely, that Jews were conspiring with the devil to undermine the Christian community and destroy God's creation. PNew stories began to circulate that the Jews, like the witches, had made a pact with the devil and received magical means from him to do harm (maleficium) to Christians. The evidence could be found in the Bible: Christ himself had said that the Jews were children of the devil (John 8:44), and it was written in Revelation (2:9 and 3:9) that the Jews were a synagogue of Satan and when Christ returned they would all become followers of the Antichrist. Of course, the ultimate proof of this infernal conspiracy was Judas, the prototype of the treacherous Jew, who according to the gospel of John (13:27; see also John 6:70–1 and 13:2), rose from the table at the Last Supper after the devil had entered him and went to the high priests to betray his master for 30 pieces of silver.

Many see this equation of the Jews with the devil's brood as the start of a new stage in relations between Jews and non-Jews, a transition from anti-Judaism to antisemitism. Until then, anti-Jewish sentiment had been fuelled mainly by religious beliefs. Jews had been seen primarily as unbelievers and doomed for that reason, and it was believed that they could redeem themselves by accepting Jesus Christ as the messiah. But once the Jews were demonized, they transformed from mere unbelievers into hostile, inhuman creatures, a secret fifth column with one sole purpose: to overthrow Christian civilization, the kingdom of God, and establish a new kingdom, the kingdom of evil, headed by Satan and his hangers-on, the Jews and the witches.

An Ostracized Minority

It is fair to say in summary that in the Middle Ages the Jews, however few of them there were in the Netherlands, were regarded and treated in a predominantly negative way. To hold the Church entirely responsible would be inaccurate. Never in this period did the popes order secular leaders to banish or murder Jews on pain of excommunication. The Church denounced the rumour that Jews had caused the Black Death by poisoning wells, never lent any credence to stories about ritual murder, and never rejected the view expressed by Paul and Augustine that there should be a place for Jews in the Christian community. Yet the Church, and mendicants in particular, did undeniably strengthen anti-Jewish sentiment. Both King Louis IX and Henry III, duke of Brabant, surrounded themselves with mendicants, and it was partly at the insistence of those friars that they decided to expel the Jews from their territory. Yet once again a more

²⁹ J. Trachtenberg, The Devil and the Jews (New York, 1962).

nuanced view is called for.³⁰ Most Franciscans and Dominicans seem, as far as we can tell, to have been involved mainly in pastoral care and to have played an intermediary role between the official moral theology of the Church and folk beliefs. Furthermore, their sermons, which were replete with miracle stories and exempla, made a substantial contribution to changing forms of religious experience. As argued above, the sinister role of Jews in these stories was not intended to turn the people against them but arose from the fact that their Jewish religious beliefs, their history, and their popular image made them suitable for illustrating Christian dogmas—such as the miraculous power of the consecrated host, Mary's virginity, or the incredible pain that Christ suffered during his Passion—to a wide audience.

Even so, there can be no denying that from the thirteenth century onwards Christian society regarded the Jews in its midst with greater distrust, suspicion, and animosity. They were seen no longer merely as followers of a different religion whose beliefs threatened the Christian faith, but increasingly as diabolical creatures conspiring with the devil to destroy God's creation. The many studies that attempt to explain the origins of this demonization point to mounting discontent in the lowest social strata. According to this view, the rapid pace of social change in thirteenth-century western Europe led to a growing sense of uncertainty, especially among those at risk of losing out or missing the boat, and provoked the feeling that a group of people in their midst was conspiring against them. It was widely believed that this group must be the Jews. After all, they had murdered Christ, they were the enemies of the Christian faith, and they looked foreign, spoke a strange language, and had exotic—yes, even diabolical customs and rituals. Stories of desecrated hosts, murdered children, and poisoned wells, and in later centuries of usury and pacts with the devil, were only too readily believed, even by people who had never seen or spoken to a Jew. Whoever committed such acts could only be after one thing: the overthrow of civilization. There was only one possible response to this Jewish threat: to expel, persecute, or destroy the Jews.

The question is whether this view, to whatever extent it is true, applies to the Netherlands. There is no evidence of mass expulsions of the kind seen in France (PLATE 5), England, and the German cities, except perhaps for one in 1261, ordered by Henry III, duke of Brabant—but even in that case, it is unclear whether the Jews really had to leave Brabant after his death that same year. There are only two known examples of large-scale persecution: in 1309 (as part of a crusade) and in 1349–50 (in connection with the bubonic plague). But again, we should not jump to conclusions and interpret the two events as outpourings of bottled-up anti-Jewish hatred. Craft guilds had seized power in many towns in Flanders and Brabant, inspired by the ignominious defeat of the mounted French army against the Flemish infantry in the Battle of the Golden Spurs in Courtrai in 1302. But their victory was short-lived. Duke John II, in alliance

³⁰ J. Cohen, *The Friars and the Jews: The Evolution of Medieval Anti-Judaism* (Ithaca, NY, 1982). By contrast, Cluse, *Studien*, 360–6, has a more nuanced point of view.

with the expelled urban elites, launched a ferocious counterattack. It is not unimaginable that the duke's opponents used the crusade to take revenge on him by attacking, not the duke himself, but those who financed him and enjoyed his special protection—in other words, the Jews.³¹ The expulsions of the Jews from Cologne and other German cities in the early fifteenth century should perhaps be seen in the same light. It is clear that the local authorities in question were acting on their own initiative, under no compulsion from the Holy Roman Emperor or Church leaders. Did they take those steps under pressure from inhabitants who were involved in moneylending and saw the Jewish lenders as competitors? Or to put a stop to persistent criticism that they put up with Jewish usurers in their community? Did they—reasoning, like the towns of Brabant, that 'my enemy's friends are also my enemies'—expel the Jews from their midst as an attack on their feudal lord, with whom they were in constant conflict, because to him the Jews were, above all, a source of revenue? Or were they actually responding to popular unrest and using the Jews as scapegoats? These questions remain unresolved.

The massacre of the Jews in 1349-50 was probably not a spontaneous popular uprising either, but a carefully executed plan to arrest, try, and burn them, after which their confiscated goods were scrupulously recorded in the ducal accounts. Another clue that the demonization of the Jews had less impact in the Netherlands than elsewhere can be found in the writings of Jacob van Maerlant (c.1235–c.1300) and the Antwerp clerk Jan van Boendale (c.1280–c.1350), the two most prominent medieval authors in the Low Countries. In his moralistic book De leken spieghel ('The Laymen's Mirror'), dating from around 1325-30, Van Boendale dedicates a long chapter to the Jews, entitled 'Van den joden ende van haren wesen' ('On the Jews and Their Nature'). He leaves no doubt as to what he thinks of them. They are blind fools because, against their better judgement, they refuse to see that Christ is the messiah. They committed the worst crime imaginable: deicide. They are bad and malicious by nature, even towards those who share their religion. All good human qualities are alien to them. They are hypocritical, stingy, grasping, and guileful. It stands to reason that they have no home country, that they are unfree and subject to the whims of foreign lords. They have those lords to thank for their lives—lives filled with uncertainty and the fear of persecution and death. No one need feel any pity for their lot; it is what they deserve.

As harsh as Van Boendale's judgement may be, it is striking in the broader European context that he never, in all his large body of writing, explicitly accuses the Jews of ritual murder, desecration of hosts, or other demonic practices intended to destroy Christian civilization. His one and only claim that the Jews had committed actual crimes is made in *Boec van der wraken* ('Book of Revenge', c.1350), in which he accuses the Jews of unfair usury and of poisoning wells (in partnership with the

³¹ Cluse, Studien, 192–210, and L. Driessen, 'Oec sloeghen si die joden doot': De jodenvervolging van 1309 in het hertogdom Brabant (Nijmegen, 2015).

lepers) during the Black Death of 1349, but even there he does not call for the destruction of Judaism, as others did. Van Boendale thus represents the traditional, Church-sanctioned belief that the Jews' own stubbornness and blindness was to blame for their marginalization and exclusion from Christian society. But he also maintains that all is not lost and firmly believes that when Christ returns they will see the error of their ways and finally recognize him as the messiah. 32

Van Boendale's predecessor and role model from the northern Netherlands, Jacob van Maerlant, actually shows remarkable clemency towards the Jews in some ways, writing of them and their Old Testament prophets with great respect in his two major works, the *Rijmbijbel* (c.1271) and the *Spieghel historiael* ('The Mirror of History', 1288). Van Maerlant must acknowledge, to his dismay, that when Christ came to earth the Jews chose the wrong path and forfeited their privileged role in God's plan for the salvation of humanity. But he adds that a Jew who has seen the error of his ways and converted to Christianity must be taken into the bosom of the Christian community all the more joyfully. In this respect, Van Maerlant contrasts with many of his contemporaries, who believed that any attempt to convert a Jew was doomed to fail because of the deep-rooted unreliability and malevolence of the Jewish people. Van Maerlant wanted nothing to do with the slanderous accusations against Jews. Even usury, which he condemned, is not directly associated with the Jews anywhere in his work.³³

In short, Van Maerlant and Van Boendale, whose work in many ways reflected the opinions of the intellectual and religious elite of their day in the Low Countries, distanced themselves from the demonization of Jews that had led to expulsions and massacres elsewhere. To what extent did others in their circles share their moderate anti-Jewish views? In the absence of source materials, we cannot say.

³² See also J. van Gerven, 'Traditie, eschatologie en zelfcensuur: Boendale en de joden', *Bijdragen tot de geschiedenis*, 7I (1988), 3–27.

³³ Harper, *Als God met ons is*, 136–47.

SETTLEMENT, TOLERATION, AND ASSOCIATION UNTIL 1639

DANIEL M. SWETSCHINSKI

The Jews in the Holy Roman Empire

Throughout the Holy Roman Empire, the Jews—as the only tolerated non-Christian group—found themselves in many respects in a distinct, subordinate position to the emperor, whose special care and protection they received. This might lead one to expect that the Jews in the northern and southern Netherlands benefited from imperial intercession, which did so much to strengthen the stability of Jewish life under Charles V in the German lands. But the reality was quite different.

In the first half of the sixteenth century, most provinces of the Low Countries were under the seigneurial authority of the heir to the Habsburg throne, Charles V. Although a few administrative and legal institutions for the entire territory of the Netherlands had been established or already existed—mostly in Brussels—Charles formally derived his authority from his seigneurial titles in individual provinces. For instance, he was the duke of Brabant, Limburg, and, after 1543, Gelderland; the count of Flanders and of Holland and Zeeland; and the lord of Friesland and, from 1528 onwards, of Utrecht. One practical implication of all this was that his executive and judicial powers differed from one province to another, with each individual province retaining considerable autonomy over its internal affairs. Provincial and municipal institutions were, in many respects, free to do as they pleased, albeit in consultation with Brussels or with provincial representatives of seigneurial authority (such as the stadholders). This state of affairs was hardly changed by the election of Charles V as emperor of the Holy Roman Empire in 1519, even though as emperor he was the supreme lord under the feudal law of the same Netherlands provinces of which he was the liege man, in a personal union. Decisions and tendencies in imperial policy tended to have more influence in the German lands than in the Low Countries. As far as the Netherlands were concerned, Charles's status as emperor was mostly formal and nominally significant.

In the course of the sixteenth century, the situation of the Jews in the Holy Roman Empire greatly deteriorated. Political and social unrest steadily increased the pressure

to expel Jews—mainly from towns and cities, such as Regensburg and Rothenburg ob der Tauber (1519), Weißenburg (1520), Mühlhausen (Mulhouse; 1543), Münster (1553), Schweinfurt (1555), and Nordhausen (1559). Jews were still tolerated only in a few places, such as Frankfurt, Worms, Fulda, and Strasbourg. Economically, the Jewish population became less significant by the day, as Christians took over the financial and commercial activities traditionally performed by the Jews. Furthermore, Jews were frequently offered up-more specifically, banished—to persuade the rebellious populace not to stir up further unrest. They also often fell victim to the struggle between local authorities and the up-and-coming Stände (guilds, corporations, and the like), a struggle that sometimes focused on the question of which of them were entitled to levy taxes and collect them from Jews. There were also a few expulsions from entire countries or regions, such as Württemberg (1521), Saxony (1536), Upper and Lower Bavaria (1551), Braunschweig, Hanover, and Lüneburg (1553), the Palatinate (1556–9), and Brandenburg (1573). Many Jews found refuge in smaller towns and villages, including Fürth near Nuremberg and the electorates of Cologne and Mainz, where they sometimes went on lending money to the locals. (At this stage, major financial contracts were handled by Christian bankers.) A very limited number of Jewish moneylenders received permission to live in isolation in a particular town or city so that they could handle the minor financial transactions there. Other Jews had no choice but to settle in rural areas, where they focused on trade in second-hand goods and local trade between towns and villages in agricultural products and manufactured items. Only Jewish physicians were always in demand, owing to the semi-permanent shortage of Christian medical practitioners.

The Reformation did little to change this evolution. Jews were banished outright from Saxony in 1536. In 1538 the landgrave in Hessen asked the Reformation leaders to recommend a policy towards the Jews. The arrangement proposed by Martin Bucer and his associates, known as the Cassel Advice, prohibited Jews, in the religious domain, from studying and following the Talmud and building new synagogues and compelled them to listen to special sermons. In the economic sphere, it restricted them to the most repugnant and servile professions. But this advice went too far for the landgrave and was never put into practice. Elsewhere, in cities and areas from which Jews had been expelled, Reformed ministers were often the spokesmen of groups that opposed the Jews.

Josel of Rosheim (1478–1554), the *parnas* of the Jews in Alsace and later the 'gemeiner Judischait Bevelhaber in Teutschland' ('commander of all Jewry in Germany'), had only good things to say about Charles V, even describing him as 'an angel of God'.² Charles, like his predecessors, was nominally the supreme protector of the Jews, and he had confirmed this responsibility at his coronation. Of course, the Jews

¹ H. Eels, 'Bucer's Plan for the Jews', Church History, 6 (1937), 127-35.

² S. Stern, Josel von Rosheim: Befehlshaber der Judenschaft im Heiligen Römischen Reich Deutscher Nation

paid him *Schutzgeld* ('protection money') in return. This arrangement had often led to exploitation of the Jews. Charles's predecessors had often demanded extra tax payments from them or sold their right of taxation to other provincial rulers. But there were no such abuses under Charles's regime. He treated the Jews with an impartial 'objectivity' that contrasted sharply with his obsessive suspicion of the Jews who had converted to Christianity in his Spanish kingdom—the so-called New Christians, discussed in detail below. That suspicion is probably why the New Christians were expelled from Antwerp (in 1549) and Venice (in 1550), and why Charles put pressure on the pope to install the Inquisition in Portugal. Charles's even-handedness was a welcome counterbalance to the unbridled fanaticism of those in various parts of his Holy Roman Empire who accused Jews of all sorts of religious and economic crimes and atrocities. Charles's persecution of converted Jews stemmed from their image as deceptive sham Christians who, as such, formed a direct threat to the Christian order. Moreover, there was no alternative tradition alongside the Inquisition that offered a different way of dealing with the New Christians.

Charles V's businesslike approach was manifest both in decisions that benefited Jews and in others now generally seen as detrimental. His general inclination seems to have been to change the status quo as little as possible. For instance, he reaffirmed the *Judenfreiheit*, the right of various towns and cities to decide for themselves whether or not (in practice, usually not) to tolerate Jews, and he rejected applications from Jews to settle in cities or areas from which they had previously been banished. On the other hand, he often opposed violations of the traditional legal regime governing Jews, and he sometimes allowed Jews to charge higher interest rates than Christian lenders, because they paid higher taxes. In a time when the arbitrary exercise of power was a thorn in the side of the Jewish community, the emperor may have been less than an angel, but he was certainly a moderate ruler, open to reason.

Charles's relatively balanced approach to the Jews in his empire was owing in part to the influence of Josel of Rosheim. Josel had started out as nothing more than an ad hoc representative selected by the Jews in his place of residence, Haguenau in Alsace. The success of his advocacy and a lack of other individuals with similar talents led other communities to request his help, and in time he became widely known as the unofficial 'commander' (*Bevelhaber*) of all the Jews in the empire. In this unique role, Josel was able to persuade Charles V to maintain the Jews' traditional privileges, to placate local authorities (usually by paying them off) when Jews were accused of ritual murder or host desecration, and to nip in the bud emerging rumours that Jews were to blame for the religious unrest in the empire and were offering their assistance to the invading Turks. Josel's pivotal role became all the more important as the Jews were increasingly scattered and lost more and more of their economic and political influence. Although

(Stuttgart, 1959); English edn.: Josel of Rosheim: Commander of Jewry in the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation (Philadelphia, 1965).

he was unable to reverse the negative current, he did steer developments in a less turbulent and catastrophic direction.

Within the Holy Roman Empire, as we have seen, the German Jews had very limited opportunities for migration. Not only were fewer and fewer towns and regions willing to take them in, but their 'economic value' had declined over centuries of ever increasing restrictions to the point where it seemed unlikely that this downward trend would change in the foreseeable future. This left them with no choice but to seize any opportunity, however small or isolated. Jewish groups became fragmented into smaller clusters, a process that gradually dissipated their political and economic power. Although they may not have been subject to constant persecution in their new rural homes, the circumstances of their lives cannot be described as satisfactory—not in religious and social terms, and certainly not from an economic perspective. They often had to go without a synagogue, a cemetery, a rabbi, the social support of a larger group, or—after Josel's death—an eloquent spokesperson.

Jews in the Low Countries found themselves in a different dynamic. They were too far away from the German heartland to be able to rely on the benevolent influence of Charles V and Josel, and their numbers, economic role, and financial means were too insignificant to win them imperial protection. For this reason, the Jews in the Netherlands ultimately remained dependent on the goodwill of the local authorities—and more often than not, that goodwill was rather skimpy.

In the sixteenth century, a very small number of Jews settled in what would later become the Republic of the United Provinces. The traces of their presence in the early years are extremely scarce but clearly match the German pattern. In 1553 a baptized Jew in Leiden, Andries Salomonsz, was harassed by the sheriff (schout), who believed he was falsely claiming to be a physician.3 There is no way of knowing whether Andries had resided in Leiden as a Jew or converted before arriving there. Between 1524 and 1543, Charles V had acquired the eastern Netherlands, and his representatives in Brussels had tried to introduce his Jewish policies there. After the collapse of Burgundian power, a conflict had broken out in the eastern provinces between provincial groups hoping to seize the opportunity to achieve a degree of local autonomy under the authority of Charles II, duke of Gelderland, and others that sought protection under the rule of Charles V, lord of the Netherlands. Between these two feudal lords, the choice boiled down to which of them would impose fewer burdens, financial or otherwise, and which seemed the most powerful at any given time. The divided loyalties of the inhabitants of these provinces ruled out any possibility of true independence from the outset. Since the Jews had already been banned from most or all places by that stage, the main implication for them was that no new Jewish settlement would be permitted —for instance, by Jews banished from German towns and cities who were searching for

³ J. D. Bangs, 'Andries Salomonsz., a Converted "Rabbi and Doctor" in Leiden (1551–1561)', *Jewish Social Studies*, 40 (1978), 271–86.

a new place to live—not even in places where the local authorities were willing to take in a small number of Jewish families. For example, the Nijmegen city authorities were informed by the governor of the Netherlands that the Jews were only 'permitted to live in the places where they are accustomed of old to being received without molestation, but they are not allowed or permitted to choose or select other places to live or form new synagogues'.⁴

These anti-Jewish measures may have been inspired by doubts, such as those observed in Antwerp, about the religious sincerity of the New Christians who had fled Portugal for the Netherlands in large numbers not long before. Alternatively, they may have resulted from the recent absorption of Gelderland into the Holy Roman Empire and the consequent adoption of imperial Jewry law. In her message to the Nijmegen city authorities, Mary of Hungary, governor of the Netherlands, emphasized that 'those Jews seek nothing but to establish new sects in these parts'. The three or four Jewish families that had received residence permits were forced to leave the city. A request by several Jews to be allowed to take up residence in Deventer in 1545, probably made for the same reason, was rejected. This ban on Jews was reiterated in an official act of 20 January 1546 and affected mainly Jewish lenders in Roermond, Venlo, Zaltbommel, and Zutphen. It is hard to say to what degree it was enforced; it stands to reason that the same internal divisions which impeded the struggle for independence also hampered the acceptance of central government directives.

In 1560 two Jewish physicians were granted the right to practise their profession in Hasselt (Overijssel). Whether they made use of this right is unclear. This grant did, however, have a delayed impact in 1570, when the duke of Alba, Philip II's governor of the Netherlands, drove all the Jews out of the territory he controlled, probably as part of his campaign to harmonize the laws and customs of these (as yet still) Habsburg lands. The local authorities in Zutphen then invoked the grant of 1560 to justify their support for a Jewish physician who resided there and treated the 'ill and infirm', 'the rich for a reasonable fee, the poor because God wills it'. That same year, the duke ordered the arrest of all Jews living in Arnhem and the confiscation of their possessions. The stadholder had disappointing news, however: there were no Jews living in either Arnhem or Nijmegen. There are incidental mentions, in a few sources, of Jews in a handful of other places where we lack any other record of their presence. Could these be rooted in similar overzealous 'mistakes' by some authority or other? There is no telling.

By the late sixteenth century, the only remaining Jewish settlement was in northeastern Groningen. In 1563 and 1573 permission to lend money in return for collateral was granted to 'Joest Muesken the Jew' in Appingedam and Simon Michaëls in

 $^{^4}$ J. J. F. W. van Agt, 'De Joodse gemeente van Nijmegen en de achttiende-eeuwse synagoge in de Nonnenstraat', StR_3 (1969), 168–92: 173.

⁵ On the incidents, see H. Poppers, De joden in Overijssel van hunne vestiging tot 1814 (Utrecht, 1926), 5–6.

Groningen respectively. The following year, when a number of other Jews wished to settle in Appingedam, Joest Muesken opposed their admission for fear of competition. We do know that no more Jews were permitted to settle in Groningen in 1576, but there is no record of Simon Michaëls opposing their admission. In the 1570s, we also find Jews in another part of the same region, in Emden and Norden in eastern Friesland. The establishment of viable new Jewish communities, mainly in Holland, came about in an unexpected way.

The Spanish-Portuguese Background

In 1492 the king of Spain, Ferdinand II of Aragon, gave the Jews remaining in his country a choice: leave Spain or convert to Christianity. This Edict of Expulsion was the culmination of waves of persecution that had made life miserable for Spanish Jews since 1391. Many of them had already converted between 1391 and 1492, under pressure from mobs of religious fanatics who forced them to choose between baptism and the sword. Thousands more conversions followed in the first half of the fifteenth century; these were more or less voluntary, some spawned by the relentless pressure from the militant Church, others by the social and economic lures of conversion. Then, by the mid-fifteenth century, a new attitude of discrimination towards these Conversos took shape, expressed in local popular riots and in proposed legislation. This attitude was not so different from the old anti-Jewish sentiments. Growing scepticism as to the sincerity of the original conversions, along with the familiar envy inspired by the social and economic success of the converted Jews, led to the emergence of the Converso question.⁷

In 1479, to bring this problem somewhat under control, Ferdinand and Isabella established the Spanish Inquisition, which unlike the medieval Roman Inquisition was entirely subject to royal authority. The Spanish king and queen, later hailed by Pope Alexander VI as 'the Catholic Kings', hoped that this would distinguish the true Conversos from the deceivers and allay the discontent of the Spanish people as far as possible. But the actions of the Spanish Inquisition had the unforeseen effect of focusing critical scrutiny on Spain's remaining Jews, who were often suspected of enabling or encouraging 'bad' Conversos to abandon the Christian religion. To put an end to this

⁶ E. Schut, 'De joodse gemeenschap in de stad Groningen 1689–1796' (doctoral thesis, Groningen University, 1995).

⁷ For a long time it was customary to label all Iberian Jews who had converted to Christianity *marranos*. The Spanish word *marrano* was a term of abuse (almost certainly derived from an Arabic word meaning 'pig') that may have been used by both Jews and Christians. The neutral or positive modern use of this word is like the use of the word *geuzen* ('beggars') in the Dutch context for the nobles opposed to Spanish rule during the Eighty Years War; a word originally intended as an insult came to be worn as a badge of pride. In the very recent past, it has once again become standard practice to return to the original terminology and refer to the group of converts as *conversos* or New Christians, reserving the term *marrano* for New Christians who kept some Jewish traditions alive in their own communities or households, or who sought to revive them.

aggravating situation, the official Edict of Expulsion of 31 March 1492 gave Spanish Jews the choice between leaving the country or joining the other converts to Christianity.

Some refugees struck out for North Africa, Italy, and the Ottoman empire, but the large majority went to Portugal, where King John (João) II at first had decided on the seemingly simple policy of permitting a limited number of prosperous or exceptionally skilled Jews to settle permanently and giving the others the opportunity to emigrate. But in the first two years after the Spanish edict, many Jews who had not managed to leave Portugal—and that was most of them—were forced into slavery, robbed of their children, or reduced to poverty. In 1495 King Manuel I of Portugal restored these Jews to freedom in the reasonable hope that they would help their king and country to exploit the recently conquered overseas territories and the ever-expanding range of new trade opportunities.

But in 1496 Manuel I asked the Catholic Kings for permission to marry their daughter, the widow of the son of John II. Ferdinand and Isabella stipulated that Manuel would have to treat all Portuguese Jews, both those who had lived there before 1492 and the recent Spanish immigrants, in the same way as Jews were treated in Spain. Feeling he had little choice, Manuel informed all the Jews of Portugal on 5 December 1496 that they had until October 1497 either to leave the country or to be baptized. To keep Jews from emigrating as fast as they could to escape this new demand, the king promised that he would not investigate the religious conduct of newly baptized Jews for at least sixteen years, and that no laws would be passed discriminating against them as a separate group. He hoped this would smooth the integration of the Jews who were forced to be baptized, bringing it about in a single generation.

The newly baptized Jews did in fact successfully climb the social ladder, thanks to the economic opportunities resulting from the repeal of the anti-Jewish legislation and the simultaneous expansion of Portuguese trade. In acknowledgement of their new status, in 1512 Manuel extended the moratorium on investigating their religious conduct, and thus their immunity from prosecution by the Inquisition, by sixteen years. In practice, it would remain in force until at least 1534. In Portugal, as in Spain, however, people found it difficult to stop regarding and treating the Conversos as Jews. There were sporadic riots in protest at the new neighbours when natural disasters or bad harvests in combination with high taxes made life in a town, city, or region especially unbearable, or out of envy at the immigrants' success. So after Manuel's death in 1521 some advisers to the new King John III raised the question of whether every trace of the old religion had truly disappeared, as had been hoped. A discreet investigation was launched to determine the severity of the problem.

The fundamental issue about the New Christians—namely, the question of how attached they remained to Judaism and its rituals—is difficult to address with any precision. The uncertainties stem primarily from the fact that we have learned almost everything we know about the New Christians from the writings and trial records

of their enemies, the Spanish and Portuguese Inquisitions. But it is generally accepted that the New Christians were a heterogeneous group, some of whose members were genuine converts to Christianity, while others were not. The preferred image is a spectrum with the sincere convert at one end and the faithful adherent of the old religion at the other, with every possible shade of doubt, hypocrisy, and loyalty in between. But this spectrum gives us only the potential final outcomes, when in fact we would rather gain insight into the dynamics of the complex process behind them. It also runs the risk of placing undue emphasis on the 'pure, sincere' Jews and 'pure, sincere' Christians, while regarding the majority of actual New Christians between those two extremes with a certain implicit contempt or suspicion.

There was initially greater loyalty to Judaism among the New Christians of Portugal than among those of Spain. For one thing, the Jews who chose the difficult path of exile were more attached to Judaism from the beginning than the Jews who remained in Spain and accepted baptism. Second, the New Christians in Portugal were left in peace for many years and given the opportunity to adapt to the new situation. Finally, these immigrants remained identifiable as a minority group for quite some time in the villages, towns, and urban districts where they settled; their integration was more difficult than that of the Spanish Conversos.

Against this background, it is important to keep in mind that the Judaism of which we speak here is not the religion of the rabbis but the everyday faith of ordinary Jews. The main intimate household traditions—in which Judaism is undeniably richer than Christianity—operate at a different level from the organized group rites in the synagogue or church. These customs become a more integral part of an individual's identity and daily life within the family and the kinship group than the more abstract religious exercises in the synagogue and are therefore more difficult to root out. That made it possible—and almost unavoidable—to remain faithful to Judaism at home and practise Christianity in church.

Furthermore, this 'ambivalence' was a symbolic, and probably also psychological, reflection of the unusual social position of the New Christians, who were forced by Christian society to convert and assimilate but at the same time were still treated as outsiders, still excluded. It seems as though for some a domestic affiliation with Judaism was a deliberate way of distancing themselves from the dominant religion, while for others it was nothing more than a set of family routines that hardly required any explanation. Besides these New Christians, who lived a kind of double life, there were others, of course, who for various personal reasons made a more consistent choice to practise a single religion, whether Judaism or Christianity, or had lost their family traditions because of social or geographical mobility or the disintegration of the family.

Portugal ultimately did establish its own Inquisition. In 1525 a fateful visit to Lisbon by David Reubeni, a Jewish adventurer from the Middle East, had met with such enthusiasm among local New Christians that the authorities saw this as the

confirmation (which they had been seeking for years) of a deep and secret solidarity that they could not tolerate. Yet for a long time the pope—first Clement VII and then Paul III—opposed the repetition of what Rome, by then, had come to view as a major error: the relinquishing of poorly prepared, doubt-ridden souls to the predatory, murderous instincts of a fanatical tribunal. After a long and tangled diplomatic conflict, and under pressure from Charles V, who was John III's brother-in-law, the pope ultimately gave his consent in 1548 to the establishment of a Portuguese Inquisition after the Spanish model.

In the 1540s, the unrest surrounding the establishment of the Portuguese Inquisition led to a fairly large exodus of New Christians to Italy and Antwerp. They tried to escape the reach of the Inquisition without sacrificing their recently acquired role in international trade. The Italian authorities, faced with economic decline, valued the commercial benefits brought by these immigrants, benefits rooted largely in their ties with the New Christians suspected of Judaism in Portugal and with the earlier generation of Jewish migrants in Ottoman territory—but they were troubled by the suspicions about these merchants' religious affiliation. As far as possible, the rulers and local authorities in Venice and Ferrara turned a blind eye, and even the pope later, in Ancona, encouraged settlement by New Christians. At the same time, more and more New Christians in Italy, because of their close ties to the so-called Levantine Jews (the descendants of Spanish Jews who had emigrated to Italy and the eastern Mediterranean region in 1492), had begun to revert to Judaism. These factors produced a second Spanish-Portuguese diaspora, loosely connected to the previous, late fifteenthcentury diaspora; its members remained closely tied to Portugal and were unafraid to turn the uncertainties about their religious beliefs to their own advantage by presenting themselves sometimes as Jews and sometimes as Christians.

Portuguese New Christians in Antwerp

At a fairly early stage—the first grant of privileges dates from 1511—Portuguese merchants had established a colony with some twenty members in Antwerp. Their main interest was in selling goods imported from the Far East through Lisbon, as well as some Portuguese items, and in exporting northern European materials and textiles to Portugal. When the New Christians also became involved in this trade in Portugal, more and more New Christian merchants began to settle in Antwerp. On 30 March 1526 Charles V therefore gave 'the New Christians of the nation of Portugal' official permission 'to come, abide, go, and pass, in these Our lands, to sell or trade or exchange their goods and merchandise and buy what they need, freely, securely, and unhindered, provided they do not do or pursue any business opposed to our Holy religion, to Us, or to Our friends, lands, and subjects'. The growth of the Portuguese trade in the

⁸ P. Génard, 'Personen te Antwerpen in de XVIe eeuw, voor het "feit van religie" gerechtelijk vervolgd',

1520s and 1530s led to the expansion of the colony and hence the number of New Christians.

Immediately after the siege of Vienna by the Turks in 1529, however, rumours began to circulate throughout Europe that many New Christians were fleeing Portugal—some by way of Antwerp—to settle in Salonika (now Thessaloniki) in the Ottoman empire, return to Judaism there, and campaign against Christianity. It was all too irresistibly easy to associate the military victories of the Turks with the immigration of a large number of wealthy New Christians (believed in fact to be hostile to Christianity). In 1530 this type of thinking led the Antwerp authorities to take four New Christians prisoner and interrogate them about these illegal migrations, but without much success.

In July 1532 the procureur-generaal (chief public prosecutor) in Brabant took one of the most prominent Portuguese merchants, Diego Mendes, into custody, on the charge that he was monopolizing the pepper trade, secretly practising Judaism, and helping Portuguese refugees to move their assets to Salonika by way of Italy. The Antwerp authorities and the representatives of the foreign merchant colonies protested that this arrest was unlawful. When the news reached Lisbon, John III—then setting up the Inquisition—instructed his representatives in Brabant to point out to Mary of Hungary, the governor of the Netherlands in Brussels, that this act posed a serious threat to international finance and that the king himself was owed large sums of money by Mendes. He asked the consul of the Portuguese trading post in Antwerp to threaten the authorities there, telling them the pepper trade could be moved to a different port. Ultimately, Diego Mendes was questioned only about his assistance to New Christian refugees, and the matter was resolved by making him pay a hefty fine. But Charles V, dissatisfied with the outcome of the proceedings, issued a proclamation on 14 August 1532 prohibiting any further arrivals by New Christians in Antwerp from then on. This declaration was so clumsily worded, however, that it was unclear whether it applied to all New Christians or only those bound for Salonika. It was later annulled, on 27 February 1537.

The religious and political uncertainties lent greater urgency to 'the New Christian question'. In 1540 the Zeeland authorities took a ship into custody on which they found fifty or more Portuguese passengers travelling to Antwerp. Further questioning revealed that these were New Christian refugees fleeing the Portuguese Inquisition, most of them impoverished, and with fairly obvious Christian rather than Jewish tendencies. Their arrival was a sign that the city on the Scheldt had become a destination for refugees, whose numbers increased greatly in the 1540s. This incident led the emperor to issue a proclamation clarifying his immigration policy. On 16 December 1540 he asked the sheriff of Antwerp and the margrave to announce that 'New Christians

Antwerpsch Archievenblad, 7 (n.d.), 182–3: 182. The residence permit originally had to be renewed every thirty days, but this requirement was apparently not very rigorously enforced.

... [who] are no Christians, but Jews or Marranos, secretly adhering to Jewish laws and ceremonies in their homes' could not share in the privileges of the New Christians, since this would work 'to the great scandalization of our holy Christian religion and the disadvantage of our general welfare', and that whoever knew 'anyone living as Jews, or performing the ceremonies and observing the sabbath of the Jews [must] denounce [them]' to the city authorities. In response to the continuing growth of immigration, the emperor reiterated his request to the Antwerp authorities on 25 June 1544.

Finally, on 5 August 1549 (before reissuing his proclamation, phrased more pointedly, on 30 May 1550) Charles decided that all New Christians or Marranos—a term of abuse that was gaining in popularity—who had settled in Antwerp since 1543 should be banished from the city. This was tantamount to giving up his earlier attempt to distinguish between 'good' and 'bad' New Christians. There is no known evidence that the conduct of the New Christians in Antwerp did anything to provoke this negative judgement. Protests by the city authorities—to whom we will return shortly—failed to change Charles's mind.

Charles's turnaround should not be seen as a purely local matter, as an unfriendly response by an emperor who had always shown some ambivalence in his approach to the New Christians, treating them well when he needed their financial support and badly otherwise. Instead, this act should be seen in a wider European context, in connection with the near-simultaneous banishment of the New Christians from Venice, where in 1550, according to the papal nuncio, some 10,000 Marranos had been expelled from the city and the republic by the Senate at the emperor's urging. ¹⁰ In all probability, Charles's decision to turn against the New Christians had to do with the independence obtained by the Portuguese Inquisition in 1548 and the horror stories that it spread in order to justify its existence. From the summer of 1549 to the spring of 1551 both Charles V and Philip II were in the Netherlands. They undoubtedly held lengthy discussions about the future, perhaps agreeing to take a more thoroughgoing approach to 'the New Christian question', especially in the light of the spread of Lutheran and Calvinist Protestantism, which formed a great and constant threat.

The emperor's actions ultimately did little to change the situation. Both in Venice and in Antwerp, great effort was put into limiting the damage done by the declaration. It was applied only to the most recent immigrants, and probing questions about the New Christian background of the Portuguese immigrants were avoided. Local evidence suggests that the Antwerp colony of Portuguese merchants went on expanding so steadily in the years after 1550 that the local authorities had to be reminded in 1554, and again in 1561, to take this growth into consideration in calculating the amount of duty-

⁹ P. Génard, 'De nieuwe Christenen te Antwerpen in de XVIe eeuw', *Antwerpsch Archievenblad*, 2 (s.d.), 227–37: 224–5.

¹⁰ D. Kaufmann, 'A Contribution to the History of the Venetian Jews', *Jewish Quarterly Review*, os 2 (1890), 297–310, and especially his 'Die Vertreibung der Marranen aus Venedig im Jahre 1550', ibid., os 13 (1901), 520–32.

free beer and wine to which the 'nation' was entitled. In 1570 there were eighty-five families and seventeen bachelors—not large numbers by modern standards, but in those days, when the city had no more than 40,000 inhabitants in total, they formed a colourful and clearly visible group.

During the most unsettled phase of the Dutch Revolt in Antwerp, after the troubles of 1566 and 1567, many Portuguese merchants moved to Cologne temporarily, continuing their commercial activities to a limited extent from there. There was a small, brief decline in the number of members of the 'Portuguese nation' (as the colony was known) by about one quarter. In the 1590s, as Antwerp made an economic recovery, the number of Portuguese inhabitants increased again, and by 1598 there were again ninety-three Portuguese *casas* (companies) doing business there. Portuguese settlement in the northern provinces did not have a very serious impact on the Antwerp colony in these early years. It would be more accurate to regard the growth of settlement in Antwerp in the 1590s as parallel to that in Amsterdam and Hamburg.

Although the New Christians had been persecuted by Charles V in Venice (1550) and by Pope Paul IV in Ancona (1555–6), there was by this time a greater appreciation in Italy of the economic value of these Portuguese immigrants, and in the second half of the sixteenth century, a few 'Italian' ports—Venice, Nice, and Livorno (Leghorn)—competed to attract New Christian merchants. Furthermore, King Henry II of France had extended an invitation to 'les marchans et autres portugaiz appellez nouveaulx chrétiens' ('the merchants and other Portuguese called New Christians') to settle in the south-west of his country, in the area between Bordeaux and Spain. Thanks to these favourable developments, the Portuguese New Christian and Jewish trade diaspora—which would soon spread to Amsterdam as well—grew into an impressive international network. This diaspora was sustained by direct family ties, a common past and culture, and shared commercial interests, and was fed by an almost constant flow of refugees, for most of the seventeenth century, from the unrelenting terror of the Portuguese and Spanish Inquisitions.

Toleration and Settlement in Holland

The burgomasters, justices, and city council of Antwerp had been the first in northern Europe to express clearly in words the motivations that had led them—and later generations—to encourage the settlement of emigrants from the Iberian peninsula. As mentioned above, they submitted a plea to Charles V in 1549 to alter or repeal his decree banishing the Portuguese New Christians.¹¹ In that plea, they argued that it was impossible to tell whether the New Christians in Antwerp included people who practised Jewish rites in secret: 'as the expression goes, *de occultis non judicat*, and one

¹¹ Génard, 'De nieuwe Christenen te Antwerpen'.

would have to be a very shrewd investigator indeed to judge the heart of man [ung bien subtyl perscrutateur qui vouldroit juger du coeur de l'homme]'. 12 They also pointed out the good behaviour and very positive qualities of the immigrants: their industry, the tact with which they conducted their trade, their frugality, and the small number of bankruptcies. The writers concluded by identifying the exact, invaluable economic benefits that the New Christians, especially those from Portugal, had brought to Antwerp: the many economically important goods that they imported, the influx of money that had prevented deficits in recent years and kept the base interest rate at a conspicuously lower level, and their purchase and exportation of large quantities of merchandise and manufactured goods from the Antwerp region, to the great profit of local merchants and craftspeople. They referred once again, for emphasis, to the difficulty of telling good and bad Christians apart, since good and bad are always interwoven and 'one should not strive for a higher degree of perfection than the things of this world allow [ne fault aspirer à plus grande perfection que les choses yey ne permectent]'. 13 In the end, little came of the emperor's plans. The Portuguese Nation retained its privileged status in Antwerp and even expanded in the years immediately following.

The Dutch Revolt and the almost simultaneous union of the Spanish and Portuguese crowns under Philip II (1580) muddied the relatively calm waters of the Antwerp merchants' commercial activities. At the same time as the rebels were blockading the port of Antwerp, or threatening to do so, all trade with Portugal and its colonies was becoming linked to the hostilities between Philip II and the rebels. In the quarter century from 1585 to approximately 1610, many Portuguese merchants, in particular, therefore went in search of alternative ports from which they could either evade the war or derive greater benefit from it. In this period, small groups of Portuguese merchants could therefore be found in ports such as Rouen, Middelburg, Vlissingen (Flushing), London, Hamburg, Emden and, of course, Amsterdam. The pressure to find new markets for Portuguese goods—mainly sugar, but also brazilwood and traditional export items such as spices and diamonds—and not to interrupt the supply of certain foodstuffs (especially grains) and minerals to Portugal opened up new commercial opportunities, particularly for the Portuguese merchants who had not yet settled in Antwerp. The sole significance of Rouen was in trade with France, which was still limited. London was underdeveloped in commercial terms and turned out to be politically unwelcoming as well, and Middelburg and Vlissingen lost their advantage over Antwerp when they banned trade with the enemy in 1599. Over the entire span of the seventeenth century, however, an occasional agent of the Amsterdam Portuguese could be found in Middleburg. Hamburg ultimately proved to be the most attractive alternative neutral port, and Portuguese settlement there in the years preceding the Twelve Years Truce was somewhat more successful than in Amsterdam. Meanwhile, the Portuguese Inquisition had redoubled its persecution of the New Christians after the union of

¹² Génard, 'De nieuwe Christenen te Antwerpen', 232.
¹³ Ibid. 236.

Spain and Portugal, and a new wave of refugees was in search of a safe haven. Just as before, both in Italy and in Antwerp, these refugees joined the Portuguese merchants who were looking for new markets.

The Portuguese merchants who sought to settle in the northern provinces did so under the authority of a number of a *sauvegardes*, or letters of safe conduct, reminiscent of the privileges granted to the Portuguese New Christians by Charles V in the early sixteenth century. These letters, issued by the States General, permitted the members of the Portuguese Nation to reside in the Netherlands and do business there, 'also allowing them to freely go, return, and stay [there]', pledging to protect 'their persons, households, goods, and merchandise', and concluding with a threat to punish anyone guilty of 'nuisance, violence, unfair treatment, or robbery' against them 'as an example to others' (as it was worded on 19 June 1581). ¹⁴ These same terms were repeated in *sauvegardes* of 1588 and 1592 and eventually formed the legal basis for the settlement of a small number of Portuguese merchants in Amsterdam in the 1590s.

Of course, the Antwerp plea and the letters from the States General related to merchants whose religious beliefs were of little or no interest to the authors. It was well known in both the southern and the northern provinces that the Portuguese, for fear of the Inquisition, would express very little of their deepest personal convictions, and that their outward behaviour conformed to what was expected of them by the authorities: in Brabant, they were good Catholics, while in Holland and Zeeland they respected the laws concerning public religious practice with which the new Republic was experimenting in that early, uncertain period. The crucial difference between the south and the north was the attitude towards freedom of conscience. In the south, the Spanish authorities insisted on maintaining the status quo and threatened on occasion to introduce the Inquisition, as in Spain and Portugal; in the north, the prohibition on establishing an Inquisition was one of the leading fundamental principles of the United Provinces. Article 13 of the Union of Utrecht states in simple, unambiguous terms 'that each individual shall remain free in his religion and that no one shall be prosecuted or investigated for reason of religion'.

The importance of this principle should be not underestimated. Freedom of conscience placed the offer from the States General in a completely different light from similar authorizations from the recent past in Antwerp. The most radical expression of the importance of freedom of conscience in late sixteenth-century Holland (and perhaps all Europe) can be found in *Synodus van der Conscientiën Vrijheydt* ('Synod on the Freedom of Conscience'; 1582) by Dirck Volckertszoon Coornhert (1522–90; PLATE 8). Although Coornhert's ideas were not put into practice anywhere in the early modern period, it is reasonable to see his dialogue as portraying freedom of conscience in its ideal form, such as can emerge only in a setting where the principle is assigned a central role. *Synodus* describes an imaginary gathering at which all sorts of fictional and

¹⁴ I. Prins, De vestiging der Marranen in Noord-Nederland in de zestiende eeuw (Amsterdam, 1927), 129–32.

historical characters debate the question of toleration at length. Coornhert is represented by the figure of Gamaliel the Pharisee, who spoke the following famous words in defence of the apostles in the Sanhedrin: 'And so now: keep clear of these men, I tell you; leave them alone. For if this idea of theirs or its execution is of human origin, it will collapse; but if it is from God, you will never be able to put them down, and you risk finding yourselves at war with God' (Acts 3: 38-9). 15 In nineteen 'sessions', Coornhert determines that all churches, even the true one, are prone to error; that only Holy Scripture never errs, but that no church has yet found the key to its truths; that every church that acknowledges the possibility of error must grant the same right of error to others; and that no earthly authority is competent to judge either people or doctrines. Coornhert was opposed to any sort of restriction on the public practice of religion and also to any form of censorship, because errors, as Gamaliel argues, can only 'come to nothing' in public. As noted above, Coornhert's perspective was too radical. Unlike this great Dutch humanist, the Republic's local leaders could not, as we shall see, rid themselves of the notion that some measure of unity of faith was vital to the political and social order and the stability of the state.

In the later seventeenth century, a few legends made the rounds of the Portuguese Jewish congregation in Amsterdam that purported to relate the history of the earliest colonists. These tales emphasized the New Christians' firmness of character (in leaving behind the lush Iberian peninsula) and their determination (to return to Judaism in colder climes). One such *memoria* even went so far as to draw an implicit comparison between the flight from Portugal and the exodus from Egypt, thus awarding Holland the status of the promised land. These stories include a number of facts that are, without a doubt, historically accurate. But aside from that, they should not be taken for anything more than the flashbacks of a collective memory attempting to root the established 'certainties' of a later period in the past. In historical terms, these legends are of little value.

Actual Portuguese settlement in the Republic began in 1592 or 1593. Over the following ten to fifteen years, a small group of Portuguese merchants, assumed to have included many New Christians, settled in Amsterdam. They shared a very few group characteristics: most had been born in Portugal, many had come into direct or indirect contact with the Portuguese Inquisition, and many, before settling in Amsterdam, had spent a considerable time wandering—in Italy or Brazil, for instance. A small handful came from Antwerp. Although trade with that city had been obstructed by the rebels since 1585 and many other refugees had already moved to the north, the Portuguese remained loyal to the city on the Scheldt for quite some time and preferred Hamburg to Amsterdam when they rerouted their trade to another city. Besides the few immigrants from Antwerp, there was also a sporadic New Christian or Jewish immigrant from

¹⁵ New English Bible (Oxford Study Edition; Oxford, 1976), 148.

Venice or Morocco. A surprisingly large number of the earliest Portuguese immigrants came from the north of Portugal, from Porto (Oporto) and the Minho district.

In those early years, religious motives or other reasons for preferring Amsterdam, aside from the desire to escape the threat of the Inquisition, do not seem to have played any role, or at most a very minor one. There is nothing to suggest that the Portuguese merchants roaming northern Europe were in search of a religious refuge where they could return to Judaism as quickly as possible. No petition or similar document is known to us from before 1604, nor were the authorities in the northern cities inclined to make promises of religious freedom in order to attract Portuguese immigrants. On the contrary, in both Hamburg and Amsterdam the city leaders were not yet willing to grapple with the religious problem, so they made it clear to the first Portuguese immigrants that no religion other than Reformed Christianity would be publicly tolerated. Amsterdam's official policy is apparent from a confirmation, dating from 1598, of their right to buy the status of citizen (poorter), 'trusting that they are Christians and that they will live here honestly as good Burghers, but that before taking the oath they shall be cautioned that in this City the practice of no other Religion can or may be permitted than that which is practised in public in the churches here'. 16 As the applicants had presented themselves as Christians, no mention is made here of freedom of conscience—and the omission is probably deliberate.

The reasons that had motivated the first Portuguese immigrants to settle in the United Provinces were widely known. Hugo Grotius states unambiguously in his *De rebus belgicis* (before 1598): 'yea, and several Renegadoes of Portugal, part of which were the Remainders of the Jews in that Kingdom, that they might be free from question, for professing the Religion of their Country; and also out of hope of greater Gain, much advanced the bigness and Trade of Amsterdam'. ¹⁷ In other words, some Jews made this choice for fear of the Inquisition and others for economic reasons. But the refugees' fear of the Inquisition does not necessarily imply that they were ready to declare themselves Jews. Above all, they wanted to be left in peace as far as religion was concerned, and in both Amsterdam and Hamburg, the city leaders promised them at least that much.

The earliest manifestations of Jewish life date from after 1602. Uri Halevi, who had come to Amsterdam from Emden a year and a half earlier, was arrested and questioned in 1603, at the age of about 60, on suspicion of having purchased stolen goods. He denied the charge, but confessed that he had 'practised his Religion in the Jewish manner here in the City' since arriving in Amsterdam. ¹⁸ In the following years, we

¹⁶ H. Bontemantel, *De regeeringe van Amsterdam soo in 't civiel als crimineel en militaire (1653–1672)*, ed. G. W. Kernkamp, 2 vols. (The Hague, 1897), vol. i, p. cxxxii.

¹⁷ Quoted in S. Seeligmann, 'Het Marranen-probleem uit oekonomisch oogpunt', *BMGJWN* 3 (1925), 101–36: 106. English translation from https://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/eebo/A42214.0001.001?view=toc, p. 538.

¹⁸ J. Zwarts, 'De eerste rabbijnen en synagogen van Amsterdam naar archivalische bronnen', *BMGJWN* 4 (1928), 147–271: 252.

suddenly find more and more Portuguese immigrants coming out as Jews. It would take more than a decade before all the Portuguese immigrants in Amsterdam (that we know of) had declared themselves Jewish and all new immigrants were routinely absorbed into the established Jewish communities. Until that point was reached, the religious life of the Portuguese merchants remained a confusing business. Manoel Carvalho, a very prominent representative of Portugal's leading traders, who settled in Amsterdam around 1603, made 'no profession' of Judaism until about 1616. Gaspar Lopes Homem was buried in Amsterdam's Nieuwe Kerk in 1612, even though by that time there was a Portuguese Jewish cemetery in Groet near Alkmaar. In short, the group seems to have adopted a Jewish identity only gradually.

If we assume that the New Christians were uncertain, as a group, about the exact nature of their religious beliefs, then perhaps we can describe this often unconscious process as follows (but can such an intimate change of heart ever really be pinned down?). As mentioned above, many Portuguese immigrants had come into contact with the Inquisition not long before their arrival in the north, either directly or through family members. This alone does not imply that they really were devout Jews, or even that they were adherents of certain Jewish traditions (a group often known as 'Judaizers'). Some met that description in a certain, 'Marranesque' sense, but others only in the overactive imagination of the Inquisitors. In any case, their dealings with the Inquisition, whether brief or more protracted, had inevitably heightened their awareness of their Jewish origins—and in all likelihood, this was especially true among those who had decided to leave Portugal. Furthermore, there was an unmistakable tendency in the Christian world in the second half of the sixteenth century to see the so-called Marranos as Jews. An additional factor in Holland was the hostility towards Catholics in many places, which—although perhaps not very significant in itself—did imply that it would not be useful or essential to lead a double life. This encouraged the immigrants to take a less ambiguous stance than might have been necessary, or desirable, under other circumstances. All things considered, then, the Portuguese merchants were, as it were, 'made ready, prepared'. The final catalyst that set into motion the return of these New Christians to Judaism can no longer be determined, unfortunately. Was it a single family or small group of families that declared itself Jewish in unambiguous terms and without repercussions and thereby started a trend? Was it the arrival among the immigrants of foreign Jews, with an undeniably Jewish background, who dispelled the mist of uncertainty and ambiguity that had surrounded the New Christians and turned their religious consciences towards Judaism once and for all? Or was it simply political and economic self-interest that prompted them to present themselves more clearly as non-Catholics? What we know for certain is that in the years that followed, more and more New Christians declared themselves Jewish, and that fairly soon all the confusion surrounding the religious affiliation of the Portuguese immigrants was cleared up.

In the first decade of the seventeenth century, various Portuguese immigrants requested permission to settle in a few other cities in Holland. We do not know, however, whether they always intended to use the permits after receiving them. They may have been more interested in creating religious havens where they were free to take refuge if the situation elsewhere became unsatisfactory, or in putting pressure on the Amsterdam city authorities to publicly accept their return to Judaism. In 1604 'Philips the Jew [better known as Uri Halevi], on behalf of various households of Jews and proselytes of both the Portuguese and other nations', was promised that they would be welcomed in Alkmaar and permitted to 'remain in tranquillity and security and live like other good burghers and obedient inhabitants of that place, and practise their religion'. Since Amsterdam had denied the Portuguese a cemetery in the city in 1606, they took advantage of Alkmaar's goodwill to buy land the following year for a Jewish cemetery in Groet (which remained in use until 1614).

A more interesting case in our context was the attempt by 'Belchior and Francisco Mendes and Michiel de Crasto, otherwise known as Abraham and Ysacq Franco and Michael Nehemie', to obtain permission in Haarlem to found a community that would be known to the public as Jewish and have the right to practise Judaism in full public view.²⁰ This request by the Mendes brothers and Michiel de Crasto was carefully considered in Haarlem. One of the participants in this debate, the Haarlem city secretary Michiel van Woerden, left a frank report of the line of thinking that led the Holland authorities there—and probably in Amsterdam too—to adopt a more welcoming attitude than ever before and accept the foundation of a public Jewish community. The Portuguese immigrants had asked the Haarlem city leaders for permission to settle there and enjoy all the same liberties as Jewish communities in Italy and Germany. But the Haarlem authorities were scared that permitting the Jews to practise their religion in public would arouse strong opposition among Catholics in the city. They therefore offered the applicants no more than the freedom to settle there and freedom of conscience. Mendes and de Crasto responded, quite rightly, that they had already been granted those freedoms in Amsterdam and that if Haarlem's leaders wanted to attract Portuguese merchants, they would have to make further concessions. The burgomasters of Haarlem then travelled to The Hague, where they presented their dilemma to the landsadvocaat Johan van Oldenbarnevelt, the powerful jurist representing the States of Holland.

In the discussion that ensued, Van Oldenbarnevelt—more clearly than any other authority or in any other document—set out the line of reasoning that laid the basis, in Holland, for the accommodating acceptance of Jewish settlement. First of all, he

¹⁹ H. de Groot, Remonstrantie nopende de ordre dije in de landen van Hollandt ende Westvrieslandt dijent gestelt op de Joden, ed. J. Meijer (Amsterdam, 1949), 38.

²⁰ A. H. Huussen Jr., 'De toelating van sefardische joden in Haarlem in 1605', *Haerlem Jaarboek 1991* (Haarlem, 1992), 48–62.

distinguished between two aspects: the political and the ecclesiastical. Once the local authorities had decided to accept settlement by Jews 'for the promotion and advancement of their city and its inhabitants' and the city council had given its consent, then, Van Oldenbarnevelt contended, neither the States of Holland nor other cities would have any say in the matter. It was true that the article of the Union of Utrecht about the public practice of religion mentioned only Christianity, but of course that was because 'in the days of the Union there was no Jewish question, and no difficulty or detriment to the public interest was to be expected from gatherings of Jews'. 21 The ecclesiastical side of the matter was trickier, perhaps: some pastors might protest, and the fact that Catholics and other groups of Christians did not have the freedom to practise their religion in public might lead some to cry scandal. The group responded with the argument that Christian emperors, as well as popes, had traditionally 'allowed the Jews their synagogues and the free exercise of their religion'; that the most renowned theologians and preachers had concluded that Jews should be tolerated among Christians and their synagogues permitted; that Jews had been admitted by the pope in Italy, the Evangelists in Germany, and the Reformed Christians in Emden; and that the pastors consulted in Holland had made no objection. Finally, the landsadvocaat informed his guests from Haarlem that as long as they had ascertained that granting the Jews' request would not lead to discord, political or ecclesiastical, in the city, he saw no reason to reject it, 'and that it was more plausible that some of them would be converted to the Christian faith than that Christians would become Jews'. In closing, he opined that if any towns or cities objected to the decision in the States of Holland, it would be 'not so much because of this business in its own right, but rather for reason of the envy and jealousy the towns felt towards each other, one begrudging another its prosperity'.

Back in Haarlem, the city council granted the Portuguese Jews the liberties they sought, on the condition that a public synagogue be permitted only 'when one hundred, eighty, sixty, or at least fifty outstanding families, people of wealth and standing, have come to live in Haarlem and made their domicile, permanent home, and place of residence here'.²² In 1610 Rotterdam made a similar promise with a similar proviso. This 'invitation' from Rotterdam was the one that persuaded Manoel Rodrigues Vega and his brother-in-law Gaspar Sanches. A Jewish burial ground was purchased, but there was no possibility of a public synagogue as long as the number of immigrants remained small.

Since the early days of the revolt, Dutch leaders had wrestled not only with freedom of conscience, but also with the problem of the public, organized practice of religion—primarily Protestantism or Catholicism. It proved difficult—even impossible—to find a generally applicable, generally acceptable solution. William of Orange and his advisers developed a formula, set out in what they called a religious peace

²¹ Huussen, 'De toelating van sefardische joden', 59.

²² De Groot, Remonstrantie, ed. Meijer, 41.

(*religievrede*), which allowed the public practice of religion by the Catholic or Protestant minority if it involved at least one hundred households in the town or village. But military and political developments torpedoed the development of the religious peace. In the south, the Spanish authorities never tolerated the Reformed faith. And the authorities in Holland and Zeeland, adhering to the Union of Utrecht, allowed public church services only to Reformed worshippers; in the other provinces, local leaders could do as they saw fit.

The application of one of the fundamental tenets of the religious peace to the Jews—the threshold was lowered from one hundred households to fifty in Haarlem and all the way down to thirty in Rotterdam—is surprising in itself and, considering that no such accommodations were made for Christian minorities, strikes me as a remarkable privilege. We will return to the subject, because the same principle very much seems to have played an implicit role in Amsterdam.

In Amsterdam, a Jewish congregation was formed by this time: Beth Jacob (House of Jacob). The exact year of establishment is unknown, but this congregation may have existed as early as 1608—when, if we are to believe the fiercely anti-Jewish pastor Abraham Costerus, the Portuguese Jews asked in vain for permission to erect 'a public synagogue'. That same year, Rabbi Joseph Pardo, born in Salonika in the Levant, arrived in Amsterdam from Venice. Uri Halevi probably led informal prayer meetings in the home synagogue of Jacob Tirado (also known as Jennes Lopes da Costa) 'on Vlooyenburg opposite Steenvoetsteeg', and his son Aron served as a cantor and circumciser.

There are reports of a second congregation, Neveh Shalom (Abode of Peace), from 1612, when a Spanish prayer-book with the Neveh Shalom vignette was printed at Izak Franco's expense. On 31 January 1612 a number of Portuguese merchants, including Izak Franco, signed a contract for the construction of a synagogue—on which, in keeping with Orthodox Jewish practice, the builder was prohibited from working from Friday before sunset to Sunday evening. The reason for the establishment of the new congregation by the Portuguese, who had presented themselves publicly as Jews since 1604 or earlier, is not stated explicitly in any source. The Talmud scholar Isaac Uziel, who had arrived not long before from Morocco, acted as rabbi of this second congregation.

Finally, in 1618, a heated dispute led to a schism in Beth Jacob, with some members leaving to form the congregation Beth Israel (House of Israel). According to extensive rabbinical sources, Dr David Farar had objected to the dismissal of an incompetent ritual slaughterer and, moreover, ridiculed aggadic (non-legalistic) explanations of Jewish tradition. This led to such discord that the congregation split apart, and Bento Osorio and Rabbi David Pardo saw no alternative to founding a new congregation, Beth Israel.

I believe it would be going too far to search for genuine religious differences behind

this vehement discussion and the ideological criticism of David Farar. Most members of the congregation knew so little about Judaism that it is hard to believe they seriously identified with philosophical or mystical movements. The establishment of these different congregations can be much more usefully compared to concurrent developments in Hamburg, where there was a similar schism into three congregations, as well as in the longer-established Jewish congregations in Salonika and Constantinople, where the many Sephardis were divided among several synagogues according to their places of origin. The Portuguese nation in Amsterdam was, of course, too small to be divided into congregations along geographical lines. Nevertheless, the three-way split appears to reflect the existence of different, interrelated groups. There is abundant evidence showing how conscious Amsterdam's Portuguese Jews were of the blood relationships between them. Much as the Inquisition often persecuted a large group of related families, a 'clan', so did the New Christians emigrate in groups of families—for example, the above-mentioned group from Minho, near Porto. In Amsterdam, the sons and daughters of these small groups generally went on marrying each other; relatives preferred to do business with each other; and, in a time when Jewish religious practice was still mainly a very intimate, private matter, the patriarchs formed congregations that reflected this 'clan' structure.

Despite protest from the church council of the Reformed Church and a city council resolution barring the Portuguese Jews from occupying the building—built by Neveh Shalom in 1612—or using it for religious purposes, the structure was ultimately used as a synagogue. Apparently its sale to Nicolaes van Campen, who was a member of the city council himself, made the building officially a private home; Van Campen thus enabled the Portuguese to take advantage of the inviolable principle of freedom of conscience. Nothing more was heard from the church, and so there was no further objection from the burgomasters. After all, the only reason the city leaders had intervened was to avoid offending the official, protected Reformed congregation. In 1614 Beth Jacob and Neveh Shalom received permission from Amsterdam's burgomasters to buy a parcel of land in Ouderkerk aan de Amstel for a cemetery, over protest from the villagers (PLATE 9). This was a further step in the city leaders' acknowledgement of the public exercise of Judaism. As we will see below, a very limited set of restrictions was imposed on the Jews in 1616, but beyond that, Amsterdam never issued an official declaration of toleration or made comprehensive rules regarding Jews. From that time (1612–16) onwards, the city leaders always acted as if the Jews had every right to practise their religion in public. Strikingly, the number of Portuguese families had risen to approximately one hundred around that time; as suggested above, the principle set out in the religious peace was probably being implicitly applied. As long as the Reformed Church did not protest too loudly, the Portuguese Jews could outwardly conduct themselves as they saw fit.

Meanwhile, the question of toleration of the Jews had once again reached the level

of the States of Holland, in response to the arrest in Hoorn of a married couple who had converted to Judaism (further details given below). The assembled States instructed the grand pensionaries (*raadpensionarissen*) of Amsterdam and Rotterdam to draw up regulations applying to 'the Jews (residing in these parts) for the avoidance of all scandals, troubles, and sanctions'. But on 8 November 1616 the Amsterdam city council —very probably trying to forestall a more detrimental decision by the States as well as protect its own right to settle such matters—issued a by-law (*keur*) intended to resolve a few pressing issues, even before the grand pensionaries could present their proposal. The church council had protested—and sources show that this complaint was based on facts rather than prejudices—that 'a few among them [the Jews] take great and profligate liberties in visiting and associating with the women and girls in these parts'. The city council therefore warned the Jews:

- (1) Not to speak or write, and to ensure that no speaking or writing would take place, that would in any way defame our Christian religion;
- (2) not to attempt to separate from our Christian religion or circumcise any Christian person;
- (3) not to have carnal intercourse with any Christian women or girls, either within or without wedlock, not even those who lead disreputable lives.²³

The first two conditions serve simply to protect the Reformed and other Christian congregations; only the third regulates the internal relations between Jews and Christians—and could have led to a great deal more trouble, given the high frequency of 'carnal intercourse' between Portuguese Jewish men and whores or housemaids, who were mostly Christian, if the city leaders had not in practice been so averse to giving in to pressure from the Church. After reading 'the Bye-Laws made by the city of Amsterdam regarding the members of the Hebrew Nation residing there', the States of Holland and West Friesland decided in 1619, in very laconic terms, that each city and town in Holland 'will be permitted to make all such By-Laws and Orders in particular cases that it sees fit in the service of the city', on the understanding that the local authorities could never force Jews to wear 'any visible badge'. ²⁴ The Amsterdam by-law of 1616 thus became the only piece of general legislation regarding the Jews, aside from a by-law of 1632 denying them the unrestricted right to practise *poortersneringen*, occupations restricted to burghers.

We have described the toleration shown to the Jews by Amsterdam and its civic leaders in step-by-step terms, because it not only came to light in that way but actually developed one step at a time. In Amsterdam, and in Holland more generally, there was never any absolute, general form of toleration. It was and always remained a more or less narrowly circumscribed, seventeenth-century form of toleration. On the one hand,

²³ H. Noordkerk, Handvesten . . . der stad Amstelredam, vol. ii (Amsterdam, 1748), 472.

²⁴ De Groot, Remonstrantie, ed. Meijer, 101.

the governing authorities permitted a large degree of freedom of conscience, although they occasionally denied it to Remonstrants, Socinians, and atheists. On the other hand, they insisted on a high level of religious—which is to say, Reformed—unity. All non-Reformed groups had to find some modus vivendi, which differed from place to place depending on factors of local importance. Lutherans, Mennonites, Catholics, and others reached settlements, adapted to varying local conditions, that permitted different degrees of public religious practice. In the context of Jewish history, it is striking that Jews were treated much like—and in many respects better than—Christian minorities. There were few prejudices towards Jews, and the group had an advantage that should not be underestimated: as international merchants, they were cut from the same cloth as the Amsterdam regents. Accordingly, they were treated in whatever way seemed most advantageous at any given time—opportune in the light of the economic benefits that the Jews brought not only to themselves but also to the merchants among Amsterdam's regents, and even to the artisans and tradespeople whose products they exported and consumed. And opportune—or at least not unfavourable—to the political, social, and religious order in the city. In practice, this often meant that they were allowed to do as they wished as long as the protests were not too vocal, and as long as the principle was accepted—as the law on Amsterdam burghership spelled out in 1632—that they were not allowed to join the guilds or hold political office.

Responses to Jewish Settlement in Holland

The seventeenth-century Republic of the United Provinces knew no pro- or anti-Jewish traditions. The revolt had brought the teachings of the medieval Church into discredit. In short, there was little precedent on which the people of Holland could base their attitude towards the Jews. John Calvin (1509–64), the only major Reformer who had a large following in the Netherlands, had written very little about the Jews. When he mentioned them in his sermons, it was usually as a bad example, showing what can happen to people who do not grasp the importance of divine election. Take these typical remarks from two different sermons:

When we see, then, that we are like the Jews, we have a mirror for recognizing 'rebellion against God'. When this leads to Him punishing us severely, can we say that He did not wait long enough, and that we, for our part, did not show ourselves to be incorrigible? So when we read these verses [in Jeremiah], we learn to condemn not the Jews but ourselves, and to realize that we are no better [than they].

Is it not terrible how the Jews are now universally despised? Yet this is the people that God sanctified for himself. But now they are so utterly rejected by all that one is scared to see them, as if they were meant to be severed from the human race.²⁵

²⁵ H. A. Oberman, Wurzeln des Antisemitismus [Berlin, 1981], 193–4; English edn.: The Roots of Anti-Semitism (Philadelphia, 1984), 144–5; A. J. Visser, Calvijn en de Joden (The Hague, 1963), 10.

On the other hand, Calvin's positive attitude towards the Hebrew Bible and the idea of divine election, so central to his own teachings, opened the door to a symbolic identification beyond what had previously been possible in the Catholic, humanist, or Lutheran tradition. Yet this identification was linked to a disapproval of the blindness of the Jews, which could take the form of pity, scorn, or animosity. It is clear that Calvin never incited anti-Jewish hatred among his followers. The later sermons even seem to suggest a deeper similarity between the destiny of the persecuted Reformed Christians and that of their Jewish contemporaries. Ultimately, the importance—which should not to be underestimated—of Calvin's counsel lies in the degree of self-criticism shown by the Calvinists in identifying themselves with the biblical or contemporary Jews; obviously, this was neither the most comfortable nor the least ambivalent angle from which to develop a new perspective on the Jews and Judaism.

Despite these ambiguities, the influence of the Reformation on the Christian attitude towards the Jews in the Netherlands was not, on balance, negative. Andreas Osiander (1498–1552) and Justus Jonas (1493–1555) proclaimed a Reformed view that, without apocalyptic obsessions, concentrated 'on the hope in a common millennial future of Jews and Christians, a liberation at the end of time'. ²⁶ In 1539 Philip Melanchthon (1497–1560) publicly revealed the falsity of the witness statements that in 1510 had led to the conviction and execution of thirty-eight Jews for host desecration in Brandenburg, thus casting doubt on all such accusations. *Ob es war und glaublich sey, dass die Juden der Christen kinder heymlich erwürgen und jr blut gebrauchen ein treffenliche schrifft auff einesyeden urteilgestelt* ('Whether It Is True and Credible that the Jews Secretly Strangle Christian Children and Use Their Blood', 1529?) is the title of the influential work by Osiander dedicated to rebutting the charge of ritual murder frequently made against the Jews from the twelfth to the twentieth century.

In short, we find within the Reformation a number of important ideas that explicitly point to a possible improvement in the Christian perspective on Jews. First of all, there was the possibility of breaking free of the unambiguously anti-Jewish traditions of the medieval Church, and often even an invitation to do so. In Protestant circles, many people believed that the Jews would be more likely to convert once exposed to the true Christianity of the Protestant Church than they had been in the Catholic past. Furthermore, many Reformers and their disciples were drawn to see their struggles as analogous to those of the biblical Jews. The depth of this analogy can hardly be overstated, and is a fact that cannot be repeated often enough. It offered an example of what to do or what not to do, and depending on the degree of self-criticism involved, its effect could be positive or negative. For example, its impact is visible in the well-known sonnet 'Hy droech onse smerten' ('He bore our sorrows'; 1630) by the Dutch poet and Calvinist theologian Jacobus Revius (1586–1658), here in an unrhymed translation:

²⁶ Oberman, Wurzeln des Antisemitismus, 163–4; English translation: The Roots of Anti-Semitism, 123.

'Tis not the Jews, Lord Christ, who crucified you Or traitorously led you ever onwards, Or spat, contemptibly, into your face, Or tortured you and left you full of sores, 'Tis not the warriors with their fearsome fists Who lifted up the hammer, or the reed, Or raised th'accursed cross at Golgotha, Or diced and gamed together o'er your shell, But I, O Lord, I did these things to you, I am the heavy tree that was your burden, I am the strong rope with which you were bound, The nail, the spear, yes, and the whip that lashed you, The bloodstained crown you wore upon your scalp, For this took place, alas!, all for my sins.²⁷

Almost in the same breath, in another poem in the same cycle, the poet also mentions the just punishment received by the Jews for their refusal: 'O Jews, it's right that you, who sold Christ's blood/Must sell your own salt tears for money now.'28 The latter poem reflects the more typical attitude of the self-satisfied Calvinists of the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic. Revius's lines also illustrate the extent of the demythologization—the weakening of the demonic stereotype of the Jew—taking place in Reformed circles. Of course, this was partly the result of the Protestants' rejection of many Catholic sacraments, but it also indirectly—and more fundamentally followed from the fact that the Jews were no longer the only religious dissenters in Christian society and that Catholics and Protestants each saw the other, rather than the relatively unimportant Jews, as the true enemy. Finally, let us not forget how many Protestants, especially in the Netherlands and France, had been persecuted for their religion and forced to live in exile for some length of time. They found in that experience a confirmation of the correctness of their beliefs. And sometimes it did not escape them that the Jews had received similar reinforcement of their faith. In a sense, Protestants and Jews were aware of having shared a common fate, and this sense can reasonably be expected to have had a positive influence in certain places in the seventeenth century.

In that century, a movement emerged within Dutch Calvinism known as the Nadere Reformatie ('Further Reformation'), which took the self-critical stance of Jacobus Revius in ''Tis not the Jews' as fundamental to its thinking. Here, again, we repeatedly find the traditional complaints about the blindness and stubbornness of the Jews. The early representatives of the Nadere Reformatie, moreover, introduced the idea of a concern for the Jews that implied the need to convert them. Sometimes this related to contemporary Jews but more often to the conversion of Jews in the future, as

promised particularly in the letters of the apostle Paul (Romans II). These theologians believed that the conversion of the Jews would not take place until Christianity had purified itself—more specifically, after Rome and the Pope had fallen and Roman Catholic 'idolatry' had been brought to an end, and after idolatry-free Reformed Christianity had freed itself from sin. The most enthusiastic expression of this idea can be found in Godefridus Udemans's *Corte ende duydelijcke verclaringe over het Hooge-liedt Salomo* ('Short and Clear Explanation of Solomon's Song of Songs'):

And the hardening that came over them [i.e. the Jews] was so that we would learn from it the severity of God towards the unbelievers (Rom. II: 22). Also partly so that through this event the fullness of the Gentiles would come in (Rom. II: 25). But the Lord will instil his mercy into them once again, just as he instilled it into us who were once disobedient (Rom. II: 30). So let us mourn their blindness in our hearts and see to it that we do not fall into the same opinion through our unbelief (Rom. II: 18). Let us also pray for them with enduring fervour and encourage them with friendly warnings and good examples to believe in Jesus Christ, the true messiah, like St Paul the Apostle who went before us (Rom. 9: 3, 10: 1). Those who give no thought to the Jews have earned punishment, or those who mock them, or are full of bitterness when they come near them, or those who so churn up Christendom with heresies, schisms, and vexations that the Jews are repulsed and revolted by the Christian religion. So let us not take offence at the blind, but rather help them onto the right path.²⁹

These Christians of the Nadere Reformatie were, on their own account, inspired mainly by the English Puritans and especially Thomas Brightman (1562–1607), whose *A Revelation of the Revelation* was published in various English-language editions in Holland in the early decades of the seventeenth century. Yet we must be careful not to exaggerate the positive nature of this toleration, aimed at conversion. The next generation of the Nadere Reformatie also included Gisbertus Voetius (1589–1676), who wished to close all the synagogues and put a stop to further immigration by Jews.

Alongside these Calvinist reflections, a certain Erasmian way of thinking was also influential in the Netherlands. Erasmus (1496–1536) had little sympathy either for the Hebrew Bible or for the Jews. 'There is nothing more inimical [adversius] or offensive [infensius] to Christian doctrine than this plague [of Judaism]', he once wrote in a personal letter.³⁰ He was opposed to the conversion of the Jews; to him, a baptized Jew was always a half Jew and never a fully-fledged Christian.

Later Erasmians had a more favourable view of the Old Testament and the Jews, because of their study of Hebrew. This new attitude was most clearly expressed by Franciscus Junius (1545–1602), a French Calvinist of the irenic school and the author of *Le Paisible Chrestien* (1593, Dutch translation 1612), who taught theology and Hebrew in Leiden from 1592 to his death. His answer to the question of whether the Jews should

²⁹ G. Udemans, *Corte ende duydelijcke verclaringe over het Hooge-liedt Salomo* ('Short and Clear Explanation of Solomon's Song of Songs') (Zierikzee, 1616).

³⁰ G. Kisch, Erasmus' Stellung zu Juden und Judentum (Tübingen, 1969), 6–7.

be tolerated was:

They ought to be tolerated among Christians: First, because they are ignorant and blind creatures, and no man living ought to be extirpated from the earth on account of religion, since faith is a gift of God and furthermore they are our brothers by nature. Secondly, although the body of the Jews is in general rejected by God, yet it is not to be inferred from this that each particular member of the Jews may not be tolerated among Christians, for the Church must be assembled out of both. So they must be tolerated for reasons of nature and mercy. From their unfruitful works one must abstain. Much is said about their synagogues, yet nothing can be found in them 'that so greatly injures the good name of religion'.³¹

In everyday life, relations between Jews and Christians in the early years of their settlement in seventeenth-century Amsterdam were coloured more by curiosity than by animosity. In 1608, for instance, a religious disputation took place in the Latin School between the Reformed pastor Hugh Broughton and Dr David Farar, in which the former tried to convince the latter that Jesus was the promised messiah, as a first step towards his cherished dream of the general conversion of the Jews. Actual conversions, which had nothing to do with Broughton's activities, also took place now and then both of Jews to Christianity, and of Christians to Judaism. Sometimes a Jewish bachelor converted because he had fallen in love with a Christian girl, especially if he had no living relatives in the area. Conversely, there were occasional tales of Christians posing as Jews, usually without formally converting and often as an anti-Christian gesture. Once in a great while, however, a Christian went further. Hans Joostensz, for instance, had embraced Judaism during his travels in the Middle East and then taken up residence in Holland again, near Hoorn, where he and his Jewish wife made kosher cheese for the Jews of Amsterdam. The couple and a friend were arrested by the sheriff of Hoorn in 1614 and eventually banished from the province by the States of Holland and West Friesland. Hans Joostensz, who as a Jew had taken the name of Abraham Abrahamsz, apparently also worked as a sexton for one of the Jewish congregations, of which he was probably a more or less official member. It was the conversion of Hans Joostensz that led the States of Holland to resolve to debate what policy to adopt towards the Jews. As explained above, this debate never actually took place, because the laconic bylaw issued by the Amsterdam city authorities made further deliberation superfluous.

The initiative taken by the States—and specifically the instructions to the grand pensionaries of Amsterdam and Rotterdam, the only two cities in Holland where Jews then lived, to design a comprehensive set of rules regarding Jews—led, however, not only to this unambiguous rejection of the plan by Amsterdam but also to proposed legislation on Jews by no less a luminary than Hugo Grotius (1583–1645), grand pensionary of Rotterdam and, without a doubt, Holland's greatest seventeenth-century Erasmian. For strategic reasons or out of personal conviction, Grotius argued that the

³¹ G. Brandt, Historie der Reformatie in en omtrent de Nederlanden, vol. ii (Amsterdam, 1674), 33–4.

Jews should be tolerated in the hope of their conversion (Romans II), a hope widely shared in Reformed circles: 'All Christians must do their best to bring about this particular and general conversion, which cannot take place if Jews are cut off from interacting with Christians.' He went on to make the now-familiar argument that 'it is therefore necessary . . . for the Jews to be allowed to circulate among Christians, who have distanced themselves from idolatry'. More generally, he defended toleration for reasons of nature—'banishment runs counter to nature'—the biblical injunction to show 'hospitality', and the fact that the Jews were the forefathers of Christ and the apostles. 'It is evidently God's will that they stay somewhere. So why not here?' Christians even had things to learn from Jews, Grotius believed—practically, from their knowledge of Hebrew and, morally, from their 'constancy' as well as their 'unbelief'.³²

He then drafted a set of forty-nine regulations intended to ensure that toleration of Jews would not do any moral or other harm to Christian society and would render the Jews the greatest Christian benefit, 'towards their conversion'. In brief, his proposal prohibited the defamation of Christianity (arts. 14–16), the conversion of Christians to Judaism (arts. 25, 28, and 33), and marriage and sexual intercourse between Jews and Christians (arts. 27–8 and 38). In this respect, Grotius was somewhat stricter and more explicit than the Amsterdam by-law of 1616. He also prohibited the use of the Talmud (implicitly in art. 16), the employment of a Christian (aside from a midwife, art. 30) in a Jewish home (art. 29), and visits to synagogues by Christians (art. 12).

Other provisions included the registration of all births and deaths (arts. I and 44), the restriction of all religious exercises to registered buildings (arts. 8 and IO), the limitation of the number of worshippers to one hundred per synagogue (art. 9), the requirement for Jews to make a 'declaration of their faith' (art. 2), and the admission of 'Church ministers of the Christian religion' to give Jews mandatory lectures on Christianity after synagogue services (art. 2I). These articles showed that he was unambiguously a product of the Middle Ages and an enthusiastic student of earlier anti-Jewish legislation, especially in Roman literature. On the positive side, his regulations permitted Jews to live wherever they wished and to engage in any form of employment they chose (art. 6). Finally, Grotius—in stark contradiction to the 'religious peace', the rights granted by Haarlem and Rotterdam, and the practice in Amsterdam—proposed the admission of no more than two hundred families, except in Amsterdam, where 'three hundred will be permitted'. This was a departure from the policies of all political leaders in Holland up to that time. He had begun his remonstrance by declaring his deep disappointment:

It is an ill-considered thing that without any public resolution or prior arrangement, the Jews have already—contrary to the old laws—come into this country, and in great numbers, and that the cities compete to lure them in, promising them great liberties and privileges, each

³² De Groot, Remonstrantie, ed. Meijer, 107–15.

considering its own private profit and business and giving little thought to the honour of God and the common good.³³

In the words of Grotius, we hear the reasoning voice of the scholar, and in the by-law of the Amsterdam city council the pragmatic statements of the merchant.

The only expressly negative responses to Jewish settlement came from the official Reformed Church. In their writings, synods, and local meetings, the pastors and elders of the Church repeatedly expressed their dissatisfaction with the freedoms granted to the Jews by local authorities. Besides the Jewish 'audacities and wrongs' of which the minister Petrus Plancius tended to complain and 'their abhorrent unbelief', which worried the synod in Zeeland (in 1618), the motives and prejudices of the Reformed commentators are revealed most clearly in the introduction to the *Historie der Joden* ('History of the Jews') by Abraham Costerus (1575–1620):

I had also heard that these foul people had requested a public Synagogue here in this country, in which they would perform their foolish and silly ceremonies, and would be allowed to spew their horrible profanations against Christ and his Holy Gospel and their curses against the Christians and Christian Authorities . . . This treatment of the Jews also shows the overflowing mercy of God. The Jews violate scandalously every day His Commandments, mock the Holy Majesty of God with their great hypocrisy, defame Jesus Christ His dear and beloved son scandalously, and spew horrible blasphemies against [His son] from their foul mouths. Nonetheless, [God] bears this patiently and even blesses them and grants them temporal prosperity, thus showing that He is a God of greater goodness and patience, calling the sinner to conversion through His benevolence.³⁴

In his telling dedication to several merchants who had supported his education in Leiden, Costerus warned his benefactors 'not to trust [the Jews] too much, because they want nothing but to deceive Christians, for they do not regard the Christians as humans'. Nevertheless, Costerus never requested their banishment and merely sought to limit their numbers. His Historie is not a history at all, but a description of Jewish articles of faith, ceremonies, and customs. As erudite as it may be, it cannot really be placed in any identifiable tradition. Historie is largely a compilation from Der gantz jüdisch glaub (Augsburg, 1530) by Anton Margaritha, a Jew who had converted to Lutheranism, and Synagoga judaica by Johan Buxtorf, the famous Basel Hebraist. Costerus expressed the narrow-minded anti-Jewish views of an untalented Calvinist who, despite his education, neither understood nor cared to understand much of the world beyond his own conservative Christian circles. There were undoubtedly many Calvinists of his ilk in Holland at the time, although it is striking how often these early anti-Jewish prejudices were spouted by immigrants from the southern Netherlands (such as Costerus himself). This may be explained by the fact that the southern Netherlanders, being newcomers like the Jews, were in a sense their rivals.

³³ De Groot, Remonstrantie, ed. Meijer, 107.

³⁴ A. Costerus, *Historie der Joden* ('History of the Jews') (Amsterdam, 1608; reprinted several times).

As we have seen, the efforts of the Reformed Church were not limited to publishing diatribes. As the only officially recognized religious denomination, its pastors accepted their role as spokesmen for parts of the population that otherwise had little to no voice in city administration. In 1612 they drew the burgomasters' attention to the controversy caused by the building of a public synagogue, at a time when not one non-Reformed denomination had the right to practise its religion in public. And besides their individual complaints about specific outrages committed by the Portuguese, they made a more general complaint in 1616 about the inappropriateness of sexual intercourse between Portuguese Jewish men and Christian women. Although in the years that followed the church councils complained about what they considered the sexual misconduct of the Portuguese Jews, the city authorities never issued any further admonition.

The political leaders and church representatives in Holland each saw a different set of Jews, as it were: the burgomasters saw 'new Jews', while all those who hammered away at the religious differences, such as the pastors and even Hugo Grotius, were focused on the 'old Jews'. The 'new Jews' were merchants who, as merchants, could be trusted in the way that merchants always trusted each other: without prejudice, on the basis of their actions, which revealed a person's good or bad character in fairly short order. The city leaders translated this fundamental trust into a policy of judging the Jews by the extent to which their public actions avoided causing offence. When those actions ruffled the feathers of 'the community', and only then—as in the abovementioned case of sexual relations—did the city leaders take action. Their unwillingness to take more forceful measures attests to their attitude of trust, rather than to the cynicism of which Hugo Grotius complained. Paradoxically, this trust—a new and very promising development in the Christian perspective on the Jews-found legislative expression purely in negative terms, in the many matters it was deemed unnecessary to regulate explicitly. Obviously that does not imply it had less impact than the blatant distrust shown by the Calvinists.

The Growth of the Portuguese Jewish Colony in Amsterdam

Despite a solid basis of toleration in Amsterdam, Portuguese Jewish settlement in Holland ultimately flourished thanks to the normalization of trade relations with Spain (and Portugal, in a union with Spain since 1580) during the Twelve Years Truce. Spanish embargos (1598–1608) had obstructed trade with the Iberian peninsula to such an extent that only a limited number of Portuguese refugees sought refuge in Holland in those years. Of course, it was possible to conceal the fact that a ship or its cargo came from Holland or Zeeland by using a false passport or foreign crew. But such solutions demanded considerable effort and were always somewhat risky. Furthermore, Holland was not yet an attractive market for Portugal's main export: sugar. The sources show

that until 1609 Portuguese merchants acted as agents in a network run mainly from Portugal, which also included Antwerp, Venice, Livorno, Hamburg, and London—although not yet Spain. Members of the network sometimes bought insurance or drew up bills of exchange in Amsterdam. Freight contracts from around that time show that the Amsterdam Portuguese exported almost exclusively to Portugal: large quantities of grain (wheat and rye), sometimes certain textile goods, occasionally fish taken on board in England (Dartmouth or Plymouth), and wood from Scandinavia. From Portugal, they imported fruit, figs, wine, olives, olive oil from the Algarve, salt from Setúbal or Aveiro, and also some bullion, sugar, brazilwood, sumac, precious stones, and diamonds. During a brief famine in 1606–7, they chartered a number of ships to supply Livorno with grain, flax, and wood.

Since the union of Spain and Portugal, a migration had taken place within the Iberian dominions: Portuguese New Christians had gone to Spain and the Spanish and Portuguese colonies, adding new routes to the established Holland-Portugal circuit. The core trade with Portugal expanded enormously during the Twelve Years Truce. After the arrival of Bento Osorio in Amsterdam in 1610, this included the vital salt trade with Setúbal, and most importantly, after Christians from Antwerp had set up ten to twelve sugar refineries in Amsterdam, it included the sugar trade with Brazil. The leading Portuguese merchant bankers, mostly from Lisbon, who had previously operated out of Antwerp and had adopted a wait-and-see approach during the blockade, began sending agents to Amsterdam. Miguel de Pas, who may have made his home in the city in 1611, represented the Antwerp firm of Andrea de Azevedo & João de Pas, and Bento Osorio the Lisbon firm of Andrea Lopes Pinto, the contratador for the purveyance of the Portuguese garrisons in North Africa and for the new salt and brazilwood contracts. The immigration of these and other merchants also brought Spain (including the Canary Islands) and the Barbary ports of North Africa into the network. More indirectly, trade with Italy also intensified. Most of the traffic was between Portugal and Livorno or Venice, organized by Amsterdam merchants for relatives in Portugal or Italy—for example, by Lopo Ramires (also known as David Curiel) for his brother Duarte Nunes da Costa (also known as Jacob Curiel) in Florence.

These tumultuous years of exceptionally rapid growth also brought to light some less palatable aspects of the competition within a fairly small group of merchants, all active in a trade where huge fortunes could be made. In 1617, for instance, Hector Mendes Bravo made a number of statements to the Inquisition, revealing everything he knew about the Portuguese in Venice, Hamburg, and especially Amsterdam. Mendes Bravo was the former cashier of Manoel Pimentel, one of the wealthier Portuguese merchants, known at the French court as 'the king of gamblers'. Other incidents like this one could be mentioned. These and other secret negotiations had few consequences if any, but they do show how tense the commercial relations were within the Portuguese Jewish colony in Amsterdam. The congregations then founded by the

Amsterdam Jews may have been more than a pious facade of unity: they may have provided the merchants with a forum in which they could air all sorts of disagreements, usually in an informal manner.

The exact structure of the trade relations of Amsterdam's Portuguese Jewish merchants has been a subject of heated debate. Some believe that the core of the mercantile network was formed by family members scattered over various commercial centres, while others emphasize the diverse range of participants who were not part of the family, a strategy by which the merchants tried to establish their place in the local economy and spread the business risks over ever larger distances and numbers of participants. There is little doubt that these two systems could be found side by side and in combination, and the question of which was more important may, given the nature of the sources, always remain unresolved. The rather impressive, rather mysterious Portuguese network was, in the last analysis, nothing more than the fortuit-ously created product of a number of smaller, interlinked family, clan, and ethnic networks that crossed political and religious dividing lines, thus displaying a commercial dynamism that gave them great value in the eyes of authorities in Antwerp, Venice, Florence (or Livorno), and Holland.

For a small colony that grew, in the 1620s and 1630s, to include no more than around a thousand members, the merchants covered a disproportionately large geographical area with their trade activities: the entire Baltic, Atlantic, and Mediterranean coast of Europe, from Constantinople to Riga, and from their centres in Portugal and Holland to the Far East, Africa, and South America. In this respect, they very probably exceeded whatever expectations city leaders had had from their settlement. The benefits they conferred were formidable and the burdens they imposed, in the form of a small measure of social unrest, were comparatively minuscule. They were therefore rewarded with greater liberties than any other minority in the city.

During the Twelve Years Truce, the number of Portuguese Jewish account-holders at the Bank of Amsterdam (Amsterdamse Wisselbank) increased more than fourfold, from 24 to 106. Not only were larger numbers of immigrants joining the community from Portugal, but now that Antwerp's fate appeared to be sealed, some members of the Portuguese colony there were also coming to Amsterdam. Around 1620, the Portuguese population of Amsterdam was estimated at around two hundred families. Until 1609, the Portuguese colony in Hamburg had developed more or less in parallel to the one in Amsterdam. The peace tipped the balance irrevocably in Amsterdam's favour. In this period, the city on the Amstel became the main centre of the Portuguese Jewish/New Christian diaspora.

After the truce, in the 1620s, the number of account-holders at the Bank of Amsterdam had dropped back to seventy-six (about 25 per cent), while in that same period the Jewish population of Amsterdam went on growing. The renewed hostilities between Spain and the Republic took a heavy toll on trade with the Iberian peninsula

and led a number of merchants to relocate temporarily to Hamburg. On the other hand, the more intense persecution of New Christians by the Portuguese Inquisition in precisely the period from 1620 to 1640 sent larger numbers of refugees in search of a safe haven outside Portugal; some fled to Spain, others to south-western France, and still others to the northern European ports of Amsterdam and Hamburg. All Amsterdam sources suggest that these new immigrants were, in large part, less prosperous and less commercially minded than their predecessors. The Portuguese Jewish brides and bridegrooms who married in Amsterdam in the 1630s included, for the first time, many from Spain or south-western France.

As we have seen, the swift expansion before and during the Twelve Years Truce also led to an increase in the number of Jewish congregations. At the same time, however, an opposing tendency emerged, towards greater cooperation between Portuguese Jews. In 1609, even before a second congregation was founded, Beth Jacob organized the charitable association Bikkur Holim (Visitation of the Sick), which took care of the ill and the deceased and gave lessons to indigent boys. At that time (and afterwards), the wealthier members of the Portuguese community probably engaged private tutors for their children. After the establishment of Neveh Shalom and Beth Israel, there were various social and religious problems that were difficult for each of the relatively small congregations to address separately. In 1614 Beth Jacob and Neveh Shalom had worked together to purchase a cemetery: Beth Haim (House of Life), as the Portuguese called it. In 1615 or 1616, the same two congregations seem to have decided to meet their educational needs collectively. According to an official tradition that is difficult to confirm or reject on the basis of the historical record, the famous school Talmud Torah (Study of the Law) was founded in 1616 and in part took over the educational activities of Bikkur Holim.

In 1615 a few members of the two communities established Dotar, the Santa Companhia de Dotar Orphas e Donzellas (Holy Society for the Donation of Dowries to Orphans and Maidens). This organization, modelled after the Hebra de Casar Horphãos in Venice (founded in 1613), had been brought into being on the initiative of Jacob Coronel, a Portuguese merchant in Hamburg. The society provided dowries to orphans and poor maidens in the Spanish and Portuguese communities through an annual lottery. To qualify to participate in the lottery, a candidate had to be a member of the Portuguese or Spanish nation residing in the area between Saint-Jean-de-Luz and Danzig (now Gdańsk)—in other words, in France, Flanders (including the Republic), England, or Germany, but *not* in the Iberian peninsula—and be a 'Hebrew' who professed her belief in the unity of the Lord and the truth of his Most Sacred Law. The entrants were classified into two groups: girls related to a Dotar member (*parentas*) and others (*particulares*). Within each group, orphan girls were distinguished as a separate category. The *parentas* were subdivided by degree of consanguinity, into first-, second-, and third-degree girls and orphans. Each category was eligible for a different sum of

money; in 1615, the amounts varied from 600 guilders for a first-degree relative who was an orphan to 240 for an indigent girl unrelated to any member.

Similar dowry associations operated elsewhere in the Catholic world and were especially popular in Spain and Portugal, where—above all in the colonies—their aim was often to promote the immigration of marriageable girls because of a surplus of bachelors. This situation may have arisen or have seemed likely to arise in Amsterdam (and Hamburg) during the wave of immigration after 1609. The Portuguese Jewish association also hoped to encourage Converso girls to convert back to Judaism. The parnasim (board members) of the congregations in Amsterdam and Hamburg were interested in increasing the number of marriageable girls in the northern ports by giving them an incentive for migration, or by providing poor girls who already lived in the north with dowries that would make them more attractive as brides. Both brides and grooms benefited from these dowries, of course, and it is contestable which of the two groups the founders of Dotar most wished to support. The first winner of a dowry was Ester Soares, who married Saul Levi Mortera from Venice in 1616. Mortera had arrived in Amsterdam not long before with the remains of the famous Dr Eliau Montalto, the former personal physician of Maria de' Medici. (Montalto had died in France, where there were no Jewish cemeteries.) Mortera was initially employed at the recently opened school, and in 1618, after the dispute that provoked the schism, he was appointed hakham—as the Portuguese Jews called their rabbis—of Beth Jacob.

The Kahal Kados de Talmud Tora

In the first stage of settlement, the Portuguese, after publicly declaring themselves to be Jewish, had taken the initiative to create institutions indispensable to their religious lives: house synagogues where Judaism could be experienced fully and freely, a cemetery where the dead would be buried in accordance with Jewish customs, and a school where the next generation could receive a decent Jewish education. Their next step may have been to secure their future by making certain that Jewish bachelors would be able to find enough marriageable Jewish girls and would be less tempted to pursue Christian girls. That was also what the Christian church elders and burgomasters preferred. Then, in the second stage, after the Twelve Years Truce and under pressure from growing immigration by needier Portuguese Jews and New Christians, the boards of the three congregations turned to poor relief. It was obvious from the outset that it would not be feasible for each congregation to tackle the problem of poor relief separately. These most recent poor immigrants were often not related to members of the congregations, and while of course they could not be expelled from the synagogue services, they were not automatically admitted as members either. They were falling through the cracks and, apparently, often seeking assistance from public institutions. The burgomasters, for their part, made it clear to the administrators of the three congregations that they expected, as an unwritten condition of their toleration, the Jews to take care of their own poor.

To that end, the parnasim of Beth Jacob, Neveh Shalom, and Beth Israel met 'to discuss a number of general matters essential to the nation and its preservation' (para tratar em cousas gerais, e necessarias a nação e conservação dela). On 4 February 1622 they decided to levy an imposta (duty) on all their members 'for the common good and general benefit of the nation and to maintain us in better condition' (ao bem commun e beneficio geral da nação e milhor nos possamos conservar). Thirty-two by-laws stipulated in detail which import and export items and financial, actuarial, and commercial transactions were subject to the imposta, as well as the purposes for which the revenue could be spent. The future imposta board could use the funds to try to persuade needy immigrants arriving directly from Spain or Portugal to emigrate to countries 'of Jewry' no closer than Italy or Poland (later amended to 'no closer than Greece, North Africa, or Turkey') where life was easier (that is, cheaper). Impoverished Jews already living in Amsterdam who recognized the need to emigrate would be the first to be helped to do so. Finally, they wrote to France to inform needy Jews there that it would be cheaper for them to emigrate to Italy or Turkey, and that they could not count on support in Amsterdam. Around the same time, in 1625, Amsterdam's Jewish community established a rudimentary lending bank, Honen Dalim, to help the local poor and families hit by the recent plague to keep their heads above water.

Once the *imposta* board was in place, it took responsibility for an ever wider range of general matters concerning the nation as a whole: the inspection of slaughtering and of the sale of kosher meat, the administration of the cemetery, and warnings against conflicts between sworn and unsworn brokers, or the sale and purchase of false coins. It also claimed authority over the censorship of religious disputes with Christians and of books printed in Hebrew or in foreign languages. It set limits on gambling, celebrations either inside or outside the synagogue, and carrying weapons in or around the synagogue. It also prohibited the issue of divorce papers without the permission of the *imposta* board. In short, everything that was not, strictly speaking, religious came under the *imposta* board's control.

Attempts in Amsterdam to help the poor by providing them with work in local trades met with resistance from the city's guilds. In 1632 the Jews were told that, unlike Christian burghers, Jews, even those who were burghers, were not permitted to practise *poortersneringen* (occupations restricted to burghers). Protests from the guilds had drawn the attention of the city leaders to the fact that Jewish merchants were setting up tobacconists' shops. Exclusion from the trades dominated by guilds had the greatest impact on needy Portuguese and Ashkenazi Jews. The brokers', surgeons', apothecaries', and booksellers' guilds, trades in which Jews were most active, did not exclude them from participation.

The trends of the 1620s continued. The flood of immigrants became more diverse

by the day, in both geographic and socio-economic terms, and it became increasingly difficult to fit all the newcomers into the old structure of the three congregations. Ultimately, the largest influx was to come in the 1640s. In parallel with the immigration of Portuguese Jews into Amsterdam, we also see the first substantial immigration by Ashkenazi Jews, many of whom were fleeing the Thirty Years War. The imposta board had tried to persuade this group of Jews, too, to leave the Netherlands and move on, mainly to central and eastern Europe. Some found work with Portuguese companies or families, while others fell into poverty, beggary, and vagrancy. These Ashkenazi Jews were not allowed to join the established Portuguese Jewish congregations, but they did pray in the Portuguese synagogues until 1635, when they were granted permission to organize their own religious services. In 1639, following recent large waves of immigration, the Ashkenazi Jews finally founded a congregation of their own. That same year, the parnasim of Beth Jacob, Neveh Shalom, and Beth Israel decided to bring together the synagogue services of the three congregations and everything associated with them under one collective authority, modelled after the imposta board. This authority, the Kahal Kados de Talmud Tora (Holy Congregation of the Study of the Law), was established in 1639.

In proud, stern words, the parnasim announced the statutes, or Haskamot, of the new congregation: 'Que o Mahamad tera Autoridade e superiodade sobre tudo. E nenhua pessoa podira hir contra as resoluçons que ditto Mahamad tomar e fizer publicar' (That the Mahamad shall have supreme authority over everything and that no one shall be permitted to contravene the resolutions adopted and made public by the aforementioned Mahamad). These proud, stern words signal that the Portuguese Jews had arrived, and had found their place in Amsterdam society. The autocratic form of the kahal, as it emerges from the following fifty-six articles, seems designed to meet the demands of both the wealthiest Portuguese Jews, who were to run it, and the Amsterdam city leaders, who had imposed a similar structure on the Reformed Church. The parnasim appointed themselves the masters of everything of any importance that happened in the congregation. They prohibited the establishment of another congregation, as well as services outside the synagogue (called the esnoga in Portuguese), however small; decided that only parnasim could elect new parnasim; declared themselves superior to the rabbis, whose authority they restricted to issues of a purely religious nature; organized every aspect of the religious services; appointed all the congregation's officials; made rules governing every detail of membership, from the admission and expulsion of members (yehidim) to the contributions to the expenses owed by members in the form of a finta (calculated over the total of a yahid's assets) or an imposta (on various commercial transactions); and arrogated the right to censure yehidim in public for their conduct and their publications. From time to time, the parnasim justified their decisions and the exercise of their authority by reference to their responsibility for the preservation of the community and their concerns about the limits of toleration in Amsterdam. Whether such feelings were warranted is hard to say.

Finally, it is worth considering something that goes unmentioned in the primary sources. Despite the Mahamad's far-reaching powers, the Kahal Kados de Talmud Tora never obtained the same legal autonomy that had traditionally been enjoyed in medieval Jewish settlements. The *kahal* did have a panel of rabbis to which religious and halakhic questions (relating to Jewish law) could be submitted. Amsterdam never had a court where non-religious intracommunal disputes between Portuguese Jews could be adjudicated; the city's authorities never granted this privilege to any religious denomination.

What clearly emerges from the history of the earliest Jewish settlement in Amsterdam is the special relationship that developed between Amsterdam's burgomasters and city council and the Portuguese Jews, which had a unique place in both the history of Amsterdam and that of the Jews. They had a common perspective on trade and secular ambition, and perhaps even a similar view of life. That cemented an understanding between them, a form of mutual trust. At the same time, clashes were avoided thanks to the social separation sought by the Jews themselves and by the accommodating attitude with which they accepted their exclusion from political office and the guilds. The juxtaposition of these two characteristics, trust and separation, which was to become so problematic in modern history, laid the foundation, in the early seventeenth century, for the most successful Jewish settlement of the time and shaped the unique place that Holland occupies in Jewish history.

THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNITED NETHERLANDS UNTIL ABOUT 1750

Demography and Economic Activity

JONATHAN I. ISRAEL

The Early Decades: 1595-1648

As for the Jews, their role in the Republic and in Dutch culture constitutes a unique chapter in world history. In Holland there was resurrected what formerly arose in Spain and Portugal and was later expelled—a Jewish community tolerated and even esteemed by its neighbours: the 'Portuguese' community of Amsterdam, the circle in which Rembrandt sought his inspiration, subjects and friends, and the circle which produced Spinoza. True, many Jews, streaming into the eastern provinces from Germany or else crowding into Amsterdam, shared neither the prosperity nor the great respect enjoyed by their Portuguese brethren. People and state alike thought them deceitful and often felonious; they were made to share the age-old obloquy of Israel, but not too harshly. They were neither persecuted nor cut off from the rest of the population.¹

This is how J. H. Huizinga, the greatest Dutch historian of modern times, characterized the special place of the Jews in the Republic of the United Netherlands, and the unique role of Dutch Jews in Jewish history. On many counts the position of Dutch Jewry, certainly in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, was atypical of Jewish history in the wider sense. Huizinga was right to stress that it was as unique as it was important. For it was thanks to that unique position that Dutch Jewry gained a measure of prominence quite out of proportion to its relatively small size.

Judged by demographic standards, the Republic was never one of the great centres of Jewish life, but judged by the importance of Dutch Jews in international trade, finance, culture, and politics, Dutch Jews from the early seventeenth to the end of the eighteenth century constituted one of the most influential Jewish communities in the

¹ J. Huizinga, Dutch Civilization in the Seventeenth Century (London, 1968), 51.

world and by far the most prominent in north-western Europe. In other words, during the first centuries in which Western civilization developed its essentially transatlantic character, based on the interaction between Europe and the American continent, Dutch Jews formed by far the most important Jewish community on the Atlantic coast, easily exceeding in prominence those in England, Ireland, France, North America, and Scandinavia.

Moreover, the settlement of Sephardim in Surinam, under Dutch rule since 1666, created an important outpost of growing economic activity on the American continent. As earlier in Dutch Brazil, Sephardim in Surinam played a leading part in the trade with, and the transport of goods to, the Republic, but also in running sugar plantations. It is estimated that in about 1694 approximately 500 Jews lived in Surinam and that forty sugar plantations were in Jewish hands. Around 1730, when 115 of the 400 plantations were owned by Jews, a Sephardi village was set up on a stretch of land along either bank of the Surinam River. It became known as the Jewish Savannah, and was virtually an autonomous Jewish region. Attempts meanwhile to establish a Sephardi community on the Caribbean island of Curaçao (also under Dutch rule)—not so much to set up plantations as for overseas trade—appeared to meet with even greater success. In about 1702 the Jewish community there counted nearly 600 souls; more, that is, than lived in Surinam and roughly double the Sephardi community (incidentally also of Dutch origin and character) on the British island of Barbados.

It should, however, be remembered that the unique situation of the Jews in the Republic and its overseas possessions was not due solely to the reasonably tolerant atmosphere and the religious and civic liberty that Dutch Jewry enjoyed. Of no less, perhaps even of overriding, importance was the central role of the Republic itself in international trade, finance, and shipping, a prominent role which was attained during the final decade of the sixteenth century and which endured until the middle of the eighteenth century. A good example of this is the early settlement of Sephardi refugees from Dutch Brazil, from 1654 onwards, in New Netherland; Jews settled permanently in New Amsterdam (today New York), at that point against the wishes of most of the local Dutch Reformed population and preachers, as well as the governor Pieter Stuyvesant (d. 1672; governor of Nieuw Nederland, 1647–64), chiefly owing to the insistence of the Dutch West India Company (Westindische Compagnie; the WIC), motivated by its own financial and commercial interests, that they should be allowed to settle.²

Throughout that period the United Netherlands constituted the foremost trading centre in Europe, played a leading role in technology, and could furthermore be considered—certainly until the 1720s—Europe's mightiest colonial power in Asia and

² J. Jacobs, The Colony of New Netherland: A Dutch Settlement in Seventeenth-Century America (Ithaca, NY, 2009), 198–202; E. Haefeli, New Netherland and the Dutch Origins of American Religious Liberty (Philadelphia, 2012), 112–24; J. Roitman, 'Creating Confusion in the Colonies: Jews, Citizenship, and the Dutch and British Atlantics', Itinerario, 36 (2013), 55–90: 70.

Africa.³ With Britain and France, the Republic was one of the three most important trading nations in the Caribbean and in Latin America.

These circumstances offered unequalled opportunities not only to local Jews or Jewish immigrants in general, but especially to experienced businessmen with various backgrounds. It meant that the many commercial links and professions in which Jews had specialized had a significant bearing on the Republic's role as a world staple and financial market. Thus, from about 1590 the links established in and from Dutch seaports between all western Sephardi communities and the 'New Christians' (Marranos), their baptized Portuguese relatives in Portugal, Spain, Spanish America, and Brazil, served the Netherlands well. Hence the Sephardim, as Huizinga remarked, were on the whole in a much better position than their Ashkenazi brethren to share in, and profit from, the unique opportunities offered by the Netherlands and its colonial empire.

However, the Ashkenazim also benefited from the Dutch world entrepot, albeit slowly at first, and made a considerable contribution to it. In particular, many less affluent Ashkenazim sought work in Sephardi enterprises, especially in the tobacco and diamond industries (PLATE 10), or conducted a flourishing trade in conveying scrap iron and coins between Germany and the Netherlands. More prosperous Ashkenazi merchants played a prominent role in establishing wider commercial links with Germany, especially in the Dutch gemstone and colonial imports trades, of which the Sephardim enjoyed an appreciable share, thanks mainly to their contacts with the so-called court Jews attached to the German princes and their representatives.

In view of all this, it is not surprising to discover that the crucial stages in the development of Dutch Jewry—Sephardi as well as Ashkenazi—during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries coincided more or less with the main phases in the development of the Dutch market as a whole. Just as the Twelve Years Truce (1609–21) ushered in a period of explosive growth for trade and industry in the Republic, because the old commercial contacts with the Iberian peninsula were restored and the Dutch could (for the first time) claim an important share of the Mediterranean trade, so too that period was, and for the same reason (greater access to southern Europe and, via the Iberian peninsula, to the Spanish and Portuguese overseas possessions), one of rapid expansion for Sephardi Jewry, second only to the quarter-century following the end of the Eighty Years and Thirty Years Wars, that is, between 1647 and 1672.

The initial growth in overseas trade by Dutch Sephardim, up to 1621, was based mainly on the close commercial ties they enjoyed with the Portuguese New Christians in Lisbon and Oporto, and through them with the trade in Brazilian sugar and other Portuguese colonial goods, including the import, via Goa, of rough diamonds from

³ J. I. Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*, 1585–1740 (Oxford, 1989), 80–120; Israel, *Empires and Entrepots* (London, 1990), 133–44; Israel, 'The Economic Contribution of Dutch Sephardi Jewry to Holland's Golden Age, 1595–1713', *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis*, 96 (1983), 505–35.

India. During the Twelve Years Truce, Dutch imports of Brazilian sugar, together with the output of the proliferating sugar refineries in Amsterdam, experienced impressive growth. This rapid expansion in Dutch Sephardi trade, coupled to the increasing size of the Sephardi community in the Netherlands, was, however, brought to a sudden halt by the resumption of hostilities between Spain and the Netherlands in 1621. At the time, Portugal and the Portuguese colonial empire were under the Spanish Crown, and the embargo on Dutch trade, dealers, products, merchandise, and ships decreed by the king of Spain in April 1621 meant a serious impediment to and a drastic reduction of Dutch trade, Jewish and non-Jewish alike, not only with Spain and Portugal and their colonies but with the entire Mediterranean region.⁴

There was no way of fully compensating for this elsewhere although, from the 1620s, Amsterdam Sephardim did establish a thriving trade with Morocco. Of course, Dutch Sephardi trade with the Iberian peninsula, the basis of their economic strength and prosperity, was by no means entirely cut off. Some Sephardi merchants in Amsterdam made use of false papers and all kinds of subterfuge to circumvent the embargo in order to continue sending shipments to the peninsula in North German, English, Scottish, or French vessels, manned by non-Dutch crews. A flourishing smugglers trade route also sprang up, and was used to convey spices from the Dutch East Indies and textiles, first by ship to Bayonne in south-western France and then by mule across the Pyrenees and through Navarre to Castile. The correspondents of these Sephardi merchants, mostly Portuguese New Christians in Madrid, then sent back silver and wool by mule, via Castile, Navarre, and the Pyrenees to Bayonne, whence the goods were transported to the Republic in Dutch ships.

However, these secret routes were as costly as they were risky, and could not prevent the overall decline of Dutch trade with the peninsula or the loss of the intermediate trade with Hamburg and England. Nor was this decline offset by the expansion of the economic activities of Dutch Jews elsewhere. The result was that Sephardi economic activity in the Netherlands during the 1620s and 1630s dropped to a lower level than it had reached in 1620. Numerous Sephardi merchants and their families moved to towns in other countries, mostly to Hamburg, while the number of Jewish accounts with the Amsterdam Exchange Bank (PLATE 32), a good index of economic activity, dropped from 114 in 1620 to 76 in 1625 and was still no greater than 89 in 1641. In the 1620s the Sephardi population of Amsterdam went into a temporary but possibly quite considerable decline.

- ⁴ Israel, Empires and Entrepots, 202–10, 235–7, 428–32.
- ⁵ Israel, 'Spain and the Dutch Sephardim, 1609–1660', StR 12 (1978), 17–29.

⁷ J. G. van Dillen, 'Vreemdelingen te Amsterdam in de eerste helft der zeventiende eeuw i. De Portugeesche Joden', *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis*, 50 (1935), 4–39: 14; Israel, *Empires and Entrepots*, 422. The figure of 114 for 1720 is slightly higher than that of 106, which Van Dillen gave later in his article, 'De economische positie en betekenis der joden in de Republiek en in de Nederlandse koloniale wereld', in H. Brugmans and A. Frank (eds.), *Geschiedenis der Joden in Nederland*, vol. i (Amsterdam, 1940), 561–616.

Meanwhile the Thirty Years War had broken out in Germany and Bohemia in 1618, with large parts of Germany suffering greatly during the 1620s as a result. There was a new wave of Jewish emigrants from central Europe, this time not merely in an easterly direction, to Poland and the Ukraine, as had happened in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, but also to Switzerland and the Netherlands.8 With the serious crisis of the 1620s and the early 1630s, and the decline of the Sephardi population and its economic activity in the Netherlands, there was for the time being little or no basis for the permanent settlement of Ashkenazim in the Seven Provinces (with the possible exception of the agrarian Groningen Province), and hardly any opportunity for them to become involved in the economy of the Republic. Because the leaders of the three Sephardi synagogues in Amsterdam were unable to provide relief for their own needy, they encouraged even poor Sephardim to emigrate to other parts of Europe, especially to Italy; they were certainly in no position to help Ashkenazim settle in the Netherlands. Towards the end of the 1620s, when great numbers of Ashkenazi immigrants poured into the Seven Provinces, the first reaction was to help them re-emigrate—often by sea to Poland—rather than encourage them to found a community and synagogue of their own in Amsterdam.9

Expansion and Colonization

Immigration from Germany expanded appreciably as the devastation in that country increased in the 1630s. However, almost all Dutch inland towns and rural areas, and most seaports, pursued a policy of debarring both Sephardim and Ashkenazim from settling and remaining in any area under their jurisdiction. Since only one city, Amsterdam, could boast a Sephardi community of any importance, employment opportunities for Ashkenazim were confined to that town. Despite the continued decline of their European trade, the position of Sephardim in the Netherlands improved gradually between 1635 and 1645, thanks to the conquest of northern Brazil by the West India Company and the commercial success of the sugar plantations there from about 1635 onwards. The concessions the West India Company made to encourage Sephardim to settle and operate in that part of Brazil enabled them to profit from the settlers' experience in the sugar trade, as well as from their Portuguese connections. ¹⁰ A significant number of Sephardim went to Recife between 1635 and 1644 (PLATE 12), while

⁸ J. I. Israel, European Jewry in the Age of Mercantilism, 1550–1750 (Oxford, 1985), 87–102.

 $^{^9\,}$ Y. Kaplan, 'The Portuguese Community in Seventeenth-Century Amsterdam and the Ashkenazi World', DJH ii. 23–45: 27, 33–4.

¹⁰ J. Israel, *Diasporas within a Diaspora: Jews, Crypto-Jews and the World Maritime Empires* (1540–1740) (Leiden, 2002), 355–84; E. Haefeli, 'Breaking the Christian Atlantic: The Legacy of Dutch Tolerance in Brazil', in M. van Groesen (ed.), *The Legacy of Dutch Brazil* (Cambridge, 2014), 124–45: 131–4; I. S. Emmanuel, 'Seventeenth-Century Brazilian Jewry: A Critical Review', *American Jewish Archives*, 14 (1962), 32–68.

Portuguese New Christians in Brazil, too, took advantage of the opportunity to reconvert to formal Judaism and to join the Jewish communities in Dutch Brazil.

In addition to the boost to the Amsterdam Sephardi community and the rise of a prosperous new Sephardi community in northern Brazil, there was a third positive development: a stronger basis for contacts and cooperation between Sephardim and Ashkenazim was now in place, and there were thus better reasons for Ashkenazim to settle in Amsterdam. By the early 1640s, within a few years of the founding of a separate Ashkenazi synagogue in Amsterdam, in 1635, the German Jewish community in the city must already have reached around 500. However, the Mahamad (council of Sephardi elders) in Amsterdam, faced with a marked increase in the number of Jews pouring in from Germany, also increased its contribution to the fund for the re-emigration of poor Ashkenazim to Poland and Lithuania. 12

At the peak of its prosperity, in 1644, the Sephardi population of Dutch Brazil amounted to about 1,450 souls. 13 However, the economic basis of the colony was suddenly destroyed by the insurrection of Portuguese Catholic planters in 1645 and subsequent years. In 1645 most of the sugar plantations under Dutch control were devastated and burned by the rebels, and the export of sugar from Dutch Brazil to the Republic collapsed.¹⁴ The consequence was that after 1645 no further emigration of Sephardim from the Republic to Brazil took place, while a large part of the Sephardi population already settled there dispersed: a small contingent went to the Caribbean region, a few to New Amsterdam, but the majority back to the Republic. Although small in numbers the Dutch Brazilian Sephardi refugees who transferred to the Caribbean had a large effect, becoming instrumental in developing sugar-cane cultivation and establishing what has been aptly termed a 'second Brazil', especially on Barbados and the French Caribbean islands of Guadeloupe and Martinique, and in Cayenne.¹⁵ From the census of 1648 it appears that the Jewish population in Dutch Brazil had by then dwindled to about 720.16 When the remaining Dutch in Brazil submitted to the Portuguese Crown in 1654, there were some 600 Jews still in the colony. They were allowed to return safely to the Republic.

L. Fuks, 'De Amsterdamse opperrabbijn David Lida and de vierlandensynode (1680–1684)', SR 6 (1972),
 166–79: 166; Y. Kaplan, An Alternative Path to Modernity: The Sephardi Diaspora in Western Europe (Leiden, 2000),
 83–4.

¹³ A. Wiznitzer, 'The Number of Jews in Dutch Brazil (1630–1654)', Jewish Social Studies, 16 (1954), 107–14: 111.

¹⁴ J. I. Israel, 'Dutch Sephardic Jewry, Millenarian Politics and the Struggle for Brazil (1640–1654)', in D. S. Katz and J. I. Israel (eds.), *Sceptics, Millenarians and Jews* (Leiden, 1990), 76–97: 87–8.

¹⁵ P. Emmer, 'The Jewish Moment and the Two Expansion Systems in the Atlantic, 1580–1650', in P. Bernardini and N. Fiering (eds.), *The Jews and the Expansion of Europe to the West*, 1450 to 1800 (New York, 2001), 501–18: 512; M. Arbell, 'Jewish Settlements in the French Colonies in the Caribbean', ibid. 289–97; Y. Schreuder, *Amsterdam's Sephardic Merchants and the Atlantic Sugar Trade in the Seventeenth Century* (Cham, 2019).

¹⁶ Wiznitzer, 'Number of Jews', 111.

For the Sephardim no less than for the Ashkenazim in the Republic, the period after 1621 was thus characterized by grave problems and periods of disruption. From about 1647 to 1648 a new phase of significant growth for both groups then began, coinciding with the end of the Eighty and Thirty Years Wars. In the summer of 1647 the Spanish embargo on Dutch trade and shipping was lifted and almost simultaneously the turmoil in Germany and Bohemia came to an end. The Dutch staple market quickly expanded, showing far greater dynamism and momentum than it had for a quarter of a century. Jewish life in the Republic was a faithful reflection of this fundamental structural change. The number of Jewish accounts in the Amsterdam Exchange Bank, which by 1625 had dwindled to 76, or 5 per cent of the total, rose in the middle of the 1640s, first to 126, and then in 1646 to 197, or 10.5 per cent of the 1,875 known account holders in 1651. This period immediately following the Eighty Years War was thus indisputably the period of fastest growth in the development of Sephardi Jewry in the Netherlands.

The impetus Dutch Jewry received from about the end of the 1640s until the great crash of 1672 was in part the result of restored contacts with the Iberian peninsula, the recognition by the Spanish Crown of the legitimacy of Dutch Jewish trade with Spain and its colonies, and the revival of trade between the Netherlands and the Levant—one of the many consequences of the peace with Spain—as well as the right to participate in trade with Spanish America through gentile factors in Cadiz and Seville. In part it was also due to a new stream of immigrants, including a number of very affluent Portuguese New Christians from Madrid, Antwerp, and Bordeaux, and to the flow into Amsterdam of capital held by New Christians from the Iberian peninsula. It is not surprising, therefore, that the quarter-century from 1647 to 1672, which was the most dynamic and successful period of Dutch overseas trade as a whole, should at the same time have marked the heyday of Dutch Sephardi Jewish history, not only in the commercial and financial spheres but also in communal and institutional life.

There were, by and large, five important groups of Sephardi immigrants that entered the Netherlands from the late 1640s to 1672. The First was the group returning from Brazil. Secondly, significant numbers were continuing to arrive from Portugal. The third group was the sizeable wave of immigrants from Spain, in particular from Madrid and Seville, motivated by the generally deteriorating conditions of Portuguese New Christians in Spain following the fall of the duke of Olivares in 1643 and the intensification of the activities of the Inquisition there towards the end of the 1640s. After 1647 many prominent merchants, as well as the majority of writers of stature in the Dutch Sephardi community, including Daniel Levi de Barrios, Joseph Penso de la Vega, and Isaac Orobio de Castro, were part of this influx from Spain. As a consequence

¹⁷ J. I. Israel, 'Menasseh ben Israel and the Dutch Sephardic Colonization Movement of the Mid-Seventeenth Century (1645–1657)', in Y. Kaplan et al. (eds.), *Menasseh ben Israel and His World* (Leiden, 1989), 139–63: 142–7.

of the drastic slimming down of the Spanish army in Flanders and the fact that Antwerp had ceased to be the remittance centre of a world empire, a fourth group, consisting of Portuguese New Christian financiers in Antwerp, moved with their families to Amsterdam and Rotterdam (or Hamburg). Finally, the disruption of trade between Venice and the Levant in the wake of the war between Venice and Turkey over Crete (1645–99) brought a stream of immigrants from Venice to Amsterdam.

Meanwhile, Ashkenazi immigration from Germany continued; in addition, a new stream of Ashkenazim arrived as refugees from the bloodbath perpetrated by Chmielnicki in the Ukraine (1648–50). Thanks to the consolidation of the Sephardi position, there were now better prospects for the settlement and integration of poor Ashkenazim in the few Dutch seaports willing to receive them. During the devastating war between Sweden and Poland (1655–60) a second wave of Ashkenazi immigrants from Poland and Lithuania arrived in the Netherlands. ¹⁸

More remarkable than the renewed immigration of Ashkenazim was the evidently increased readiness of both the Sephardi elders and the Amsterdam municipal council to foster their integration with the permanent local population. While money was still being spent on aid for re-emigration to Germany and Poland, larger amounts were being paid out for assistance to the immigrants and their integration into Amsterdam city life. This is best explained as a direct consequence of the growth, after 1648, of the Dutch overseas trade and export industry, and of the ambitious town expansion plans of the Amsterdam city fathers during those years. On all sides there was a shortage of every sort of craftsman, and immigrants were suddenly looked on as an asset and no longer as an unwelcome encumbrance. During this crucial phase, the Ashkenazi population of Amsterdam grew from less than a thousand to approximately 2,500.²⁰

Following the first substantial wave of Polish-Lithuanian Jewish immigration during the late 1650s (resulting from the Swedish–Polish War of 1655–60), a separate Polish Jewish community was formed in Amsterdam; it stayed on notably bad terms with the main Ashkenazi community but was supported in its quarrels with the larger Ashkenazi community by the Sephardi synagogue. Polish autonomy in Holland strengthened the primacy of the Sephardim at the expense of the main Ashkenazi body, which led the latter to dispute its validity before the Amsterdam city council. In 1673 the formal split ended when the city required the Polish-Lithuanian offshoot—in fact Lithuanians formed the majority of this Jewish congregation—to rejoin the main 'High German' community. There are indications, however, that informally the friction between the 'High German' majority and the Polish-Lithuanian minority persisted through the 1670s into the 1680s.²¹

¹⁸ Kaplan, 'The Portuguese Community', 35.

 $^{^{19}\,}$ Ibid. 35–7; Y. Kaplan, 'Amsterdam and Ashkenazic Migration in the Seventeenth Century', StR, special issue accompanying vol. 23 (1989), 36–41.

²⁰ Kaplan, 'Amsterdam and Ashkenazic Migration', 44; Kaplan, 'The Portuguese Community', 35.

²¹ Fuks, 'De Amsterdamse opperrabbijn David Lida', 167–8; Kaplan, An Alternative Path, 97–9.

The influx of sizeable waves of two kinds of immigrant, Sephardi and Ashkenazi, inevitably faced the leaders of both communities with a series of grave political, social, and economic problems. ²² Since most Dutch towns (with the exception of Amsterdam and Rotterdam) and large areas of the countryside continued to exclude Jews of all categories, it was obvious that only a proportion of the immigrants could be accommodated inside the borders of the Republic. The Brazilian colony had been lost and there was an urgent need to found new Sephardi settlements, not only (where possible) on the American continent or in other parts of Europe, but also, somehow, in the Netherlands itself.

The problems the two communities had to contend with were, of course, by no means identical. As a group, the Sephardim were much more prosperous and better integrated into society at large than the Ashkenazim, and at this phase of their development had far greater resources with which to solve their problems. Only a few Sephardim had been reduced to beggary or vagrancy, which was the lot of a large section of the Ashkenazi population. However, the Sephardim were in urgent need of new commercial outlets and markets, the more so as they were generally unwilling to take jobs as unskilled, poorly paid workers or as servants to other Sephardim, work that the Ashkenazim were only too willing to accept. But though the Sephardim enjoyed considerable prosperity and great prestige at the time, their commercial activities were nevertheless strictly confined to a narrow field.²³ As Jews, they were excluded by the guilds, a major force in every town, from most types of retail trade, and from most crafts.

The pressures created by this situation inspired leading Jews in the Republic, including Menasseh ben Israel (1604–57), to make ambitious plans in the 1650s for the establishment of Jewish 'colonies' in the New and the Old Worlds, and as far as the latter was concerned in both the Netherlands itself and in neighbouring countries. The plan for a Jewish settlement in England was merely the most famous in a long series of remarkable projects. Menasseh ben Israel saw the attempt to bring Jews back to England as a profound, messianic, spiritual mission, but no more so than the founding of synagogues in the Americas and the granting of several new charters for Jewish colonies in the north Italian principalities. He recorded that he himself possessed copies of a number of such charters, including one from the grand duke of Tuscany.²⁴

Another outstanding figure who took an interest in these projects was Joao de Yllan, who in 1651 obtained a charter from the West India Company for a Jewish colony in Curaçao, and that year himself accompanied a group of twelve Jewish families on a first, abortive attempt to found a Sephardi settlement on that island. ²⁵ In 1666, during

²² Israel, *Diasporas*, 368–72, 390–4. ²³ Israel, 'The Economic Contribution', 505–15.

²⁴ M. ben Israel, Mikveh Israel (Amsterdam, 1650), 107–8; id., Piedra Gloriosa (Amsterdam, 1655), 247–8.

²⁵ Z. Loker, 'Juan de Yllan, Merchant Adventurer and Colonial Promotor: New Evidence', StR 17 (1983), 22–31: 22–3.

the height of messianic expectations, De Yllan, in response to the appeal by Shabetai Tsevi (see Ch. 4), petitioned Charles II of England for a safe-conduct (it was in the middle of the Second Anglo-Dutch War) enabling him to take fifty Jewish families from the Republic to the Holy Land by ship. Then there was Lopo Ramires (David Curiel), who was responsible for an attempt in 1653–4 to gain the approval of the Habsburg rulers in Brussels for the establishment of a Jewish community in Borgerhout near Antwerp. These negotiations led in February 1654 to a formal complaint in the name of the Pope to the Spanish Council of State in Madrid. 26

The most impressive of all the influential advocates of overseas colonization was David Nassi (Joseph Nunes de Fonseca; 1612-85), a veteran of the Jewish adventure in Brazil, who was later granted several charters by the WIC for Jewish settlements in tropical America. In February 1652, on the eve of the First Anglo-Dutch War (1652–4), he was given leave to settle fifty Sephardi families in Curaçao; little apparently came of this experiment. In 1657 the States of Zeeland (which then ruled over the Dutch possessions in the western part of Guyana) issued him, together with a group of Sephardi refugees from Brazil who had settled in Middelburg, with an extremely favourable charter for the establishment of a Jewish community in Essequibo, then officially known as Nova Zeelandia. David Nassi did indeed establish Sephardi groups in Essequibo and Pomeroon, but these communities quickly declined, especially after the English had plundered the region in 1665. Nassi also entered into an agreement for a Jewish settlement in Cayenne, an area that was for several years under Dutch control before the French took it in 1664. At that point the Sephardi colonists led by Nassi moved to Nova Zeelandia. When this too was seized by the English in 1666, he took them to Surinam, which was then still under English control. From 1666 Surinam remained the most important Sephardi centre in Guyana.

All these projects, just like Menasseh ben Israel's mission to England, were aimed in essence at the establishment of new Sephardi communities. Moreover, they were all supported by at least one or two prominent figures among Dutch Sephardi leaders. Anglo-Jewish historians have always taken some pride in arguing that the decision under Cromwell to readmit Jews to the English Commonwealth was not the result of an initiative by Dutch Jews, and that Menasseh ben Israel had acted against, and not in accordance with, the wishes of the leaders of the Amsterdam Sephardim. However, recent research indicates that this view is mistaken: the Sephardi leaders in Amsterdam did in fact support and encourage the English projects.²⁷

The parnasim, office-holders in the Amsterdam Sephardi congregation, were cer-

²⁶ Archivo General de Simancas (Valladolid) Estado 2185 consulta of the Consejo de estado, 7 Feb. 1654; Israel, 'Spain and the Dutch Sephardim', 34–5; see also E. Ouverleaux, *Notes et documents sur les juifs de Belgique sous l'ancien régime* (Brussels, 1885), 29 and 38–41 and L. Dequeker, 'Heropleving van het Jodendom te Antwerpen in de zeventiende eeuw?', *De zeventiende eeuw*, 5 (1989), 154–61: 154–5.

²⁷ See Israel, 'Menasseh ben Israel and the Dutch Sephardic Colonization Movement'.

tainly bound—out of loyalty to their city, to the States of Holland, and to the Republic —to act with the utmost circumspection towards Menasseh's mission to England. That country was at the time considered a dangerous competitor and an enemy of the Republic by the Dutch regents and merchants. For Dutch Sephardi merchants, however, gaining greater access to England and her colonies in the Caribbean was of considerable importance. In the early 1650s there was already a small (Dutch) Sephardi colony in Barbados, which exported sugar and tobacco to Amsterdam and Hamburg.²⁸ In the autumn of 1654 one of Menasseh's most prominent supporters, Manuel Martinez (David Abrabanel) Dormido, another Brazilian veteran, made indirect contact from England with the Amsterdam parnasim through his main ally in Amsterdam, no less a person than David Nassi. To strengthen his negotiating position with the English authorities, Dormido asked for the formal support of the Amsterdam Mahamad. The resulting deliberations between Nassi and the parnasim are particularly revealing. The Amsterdam Sephardi leaders assured Nassi and the petitioners that the common good was very close to their hearts, that it was their ardent wish that the Sephardi people be accorded more living space, and that they recognized that the creation of a new community in that region would greatly benefit the people and could help to enhance trade between these provinces (the Netherlands) and England and the not inconsiderable profits it would yield.²⁹ The discussions also revealed that Nassi, with his passion for colonization, and the Mahamad, with its support of colonization projects, had one and the same objective: the encouragement of the emigration of Portuguese New Christians from France, Spain, and Portugal and the return of immigrants to formal Judaism, in both the Republic and England.³⁰

At the same time the *parnasim*, including Jacob Delmonte (del Sotto), ³¹ the most prominent among them, a prosperous merchant and partner of Nassi, together with many other Dutch Sephardim, concluded that they could not make a direct appeal to Oliver Cromwell, nor be officially involved in the approaches to England, for fear that they might seem to be compromising 'the gratitude we feel and the loyal character of our conduct' in the eyes of the Amsterdam burgomasters and of the States of Holland. This policy was repeatedly confirmed thereafter by Delmonte and his colleagues in the Mahamad: Abraham Farar, Salomon Salom, and the treasurer for that year (1654), Jacob Bueno de Mezquita, whom Nassi had also consulted.

Although these projects were primarily intended to relieve the pressure on the Dutch Sephardi community, it goes without saying that, if successful, they would also have created better opportunities for Ashkenazim. In the Netherlands the economic

²⁸ Israel, *Diasporas*, 400–2, 409–11, 415–16, 420, 518–20.

²⁹ The National Archives, Kew, S.P. 84/160, fo. 90. David Nassy to Martinez Dormido. Amsterdam, 20 Nov.

³¹ For Jacob Delmonte (1612–70), who was said to be the seventh richest Amsterdam Sephardi in 1674, see D. M. Swetschinski, 'The Portuguese Jewish Merchants of Seventeenth Century Amsterdam: A Social Profile' (Ph.D. diss., Brandeis University, 1979), 486–7.

activities of Sephardim and Ashkenazim were interrelated, and during these decades the Ashkenazi congregations were in many ways still dependent on the support and leadership of the Sephardim. In the end, however, nothing much came of all the English plans. A number of Jews emigrated to London in 1655 and 1656 in the hope of taking up residence there under more favourable conditions, but many of them returned disappointed in the footsteps of Menasseh, who, following his departure from England, settled in Middelburg for the last few months of his life.

Of more weight than the efforts of the Sephardim in England was the fact that they were officially granted permission to settle in a larger number of Dutch towns, which soon afterwards opened the door to Ashkenazim as well. Thus towards the end of the 1640s, Rotterdam, where there had been a short-lived Sephardi community at the beginning of the century, saw the emergence of a new community, thanks in particular to the arrival of Gil Lopes de Pinto (d. 1668), an extremely wealthy financier of Portuguese New Christian descent, who had been established in Antwerp for many years and now openly returned to the Jewish faith, taking the name of Abraham.³² In the person of Abraham de Pinto, Rotterdam gained its richest burgher by far, one who could negotiate with the town council from a position of strength and who was granted protection for the community he led. In 1647 he received official permission to set up a yeshiva in his house and support a number of poor talmudic students.

The beginnings of an Ashkenazi colony in Rotterdam in the 1650s were directly bound up with the success of the Sephardim. In the early years of their community, the Ashkenazim in that town, just as formerly in Amsterdam, remained heavily dependent upon the Sephardim. When the Ashkenazim in Rotterdam founded a congregation of their own in about 1660, the city's Sephardi rabbi, Josiah Pardo, remained their spiritual leader until his departure from the city in 1672. In about 1690 some eighty Jewish families (or 400 individuals) were living in Rotterdam. ³³ Although we do not know the precise ratio of Sephardim to Ashkenazim, it seems likely that the latter were in the majority at the time.

A similar pattern existed in Middelburg and in a small number of other Dutch towns to which Sephardim were admitted between 1647 and 1672. Such towns were few and far between. One of them was Amersfoort, which seemed predestined to become one of the most important centres of Jewish life in the Netherlands. In about 1660 the first 'Portuguese' settled there, and in 1669 the first Ashkenazi businessman followed. In 1676 a second Ashkenazi businessman entered into a contract with the town coun-

³² For Abraham de Pinto and the establishment of Jewish communities in Rotterdam in the 1640s and 1650s, see H. P. Salomon, 'The Pinto Manuscript', StR 9 (1975), 7–31, and D. Hausdorff, Jizkor, Platenatlas van drie en een halve eeuw geschiedenis van de joodse gemeente in Rotterdam (Baarn, 1978), 11–24.

³³ J. I. Israel, 'Gregorio Leti (1631–1701) and the Dutch Sephardi Elite at the Close of the Seventeenth Century', in A. Rapoport-Albert and S. J. Zipperstein (eds.), *Jewish History: Essays in Honour of Chimen Abramsky* (London, 1988), 267–84: 270.

cil to run the public pawnbroker's shop. In Amersfoort the mutual dependence of Sephardim and Ashkenazim was enduring in character, and the two groups held joint prayer meetings. In 1727, when a 'public' synagogue was acquired, both groups made use of it.³⁴

Naturally and inevitably, the Sephardi population, whose economic activities were largely bound up with overseas and colonial trade, remained heavily dependent on the great commercial centres in seaports such as Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and Middelburg. Amersfoort was an exception: the town was a vital link in the tobacco trade and also a depot for the transport to the Amsterdam processors of tobacco grown in Gelderland and the eastern part of Utrecht province. The tobacco trade also provided the economic basis for a mixed Sephardi–Ashkenazi community established in 1650 in Nijkerk, not far from Amersfoort. With the exception of Amersfoort and Nijkerk, the presence of Sephardim in the interior of the Republic remained a rare phenomenon. Kampen was the only town in the eastern part of the Netherlands where a few 'Portuguese' reached an agreement with the municipality and were able to take up residence, though with some misgivings.

The opportunities for Ashkenazim to settle in places where no Sephardi community had previously existed were extremely limited in the mid-seventeenth century. Until late in the century they were excluded from most Dutch towns and rural areas. There were, however, two exceptions. As early as the 1560s small numbers of German Jews started to fan out from East Friesland into the Ommelanden, the rural area around the city of Groningen, and in 1563, when Habsburg rule was fast losing its hold over the Netherlands, Appingedam gave the German Jew Joest Muesken official permission to run a pawnbroker's shop. The Jewish community in Appingedam (centred on the pawnbroking business) remained very small throughout the seventeenth century. In 1656 it officially numbered no more than three or four families, and in 1703 only six, or about thirty people. Tews lived not only in the surrounding villages—especially in the north-eastern Ommelanden—but by about the 1650s had also arrived in Delfzijl, albeit in very small numbers.

Ashkenazim owed their opportunity to stay and settle in the Ommelanden chiefly to a few members of the local landed aristocracy, who protected them against the threat of expulsion by provincial, clerical, and local authorities. Until the end of the seventeenth century, only the far-flung eastern corners of Gelderland offered them comparable opportunities. This area contained a number of autonomous or semi-

³⁴ C. Reijnders, Van 'joodsche Natiën' tot joodse Nederlanders, 2nd edn. (Amsterdam, 1970), 140–1.

³⁵ J. H. de Vey Mestdagh, 'De Joodse gemeente van Appingedam', in id. (ed.), *Joden in Oost-Groningen* (Groningen, 1980), 39–44; see also in the same collection J. Dijkstra, 'De Joodse gemeente van Delfzijl', 303–431: 307–10. By contrast, there is no evidence of permanent Jewish settlement in the Westerkwartier or the Ommelanden during the 16th and 17th cc.; see G. J. van Klinken, 'Immigranten in het Westerkwartier, 1700–1795', in Van Klinken and J. H. de Vey Mestdagh (eds.), *De Joodse gemeenschap in het Groninger Westerkwartier, Peize en Roden* (Groningen, 1987), 17–29.

autonomous territorial enclaves over which the States of Gelderland exerted little or no authority. That was particularly true of the Liemers, a region in what is now East Gelderland, but was then outside the Republic and under the control of the elector of Brandenburg, which served as a corridor between the duchy of Cleves and the Republic. Here, in such villages as Gendringen and the neighbouring districts along the borders of Cleves near 's-Heerenberg, tiny Jewish communities that were part of the larger congregations of Cleves and Emmerich could be found in the 1640s and 1650s, if not earlier.³⁶

Ashkenazi immigrants also eventually managed to establish themselves in the town of Nijmegen, somewhat further to the west. During the first half of the century, Jews from Cleves and the Liemers were allowed to visit the town during the daytime but were not allowed to sell goods or to settle there. In 1652 a municipal ordinance granted hawking licences to Jews from outside the town, for the sale of oranges and lemons (imported in bulk from Spain and Portugal by Sephardi merchants in Amsterdam). In 1655 Nijmegen signed a contract with Leeman Gompertz from Amsterdam, appointing him and his brother-in-law, Abraham Cohen, managers of the municipal pawnshop, but the arrangement did not last long. Not until the 1670s did a small, but wellorganized, stable, and gradually expanding, Jewish community of purely Ashkenazi character manage to gain a firm foothold in the town. The about the same period an Ashkenazi community also became established in Zaltbommel, soon after Kosman Gompertz had taken over as the local pawnbroker in 1679.

In Friesland there were few signs of Jewish settlement before 1660; only towards the end of that decade were small groups of Ashkenazim able to take up permanent residence in Leeuwarden, Workum, and other towns.³⁸ No sooner had they settled in that province, however, than Jews began to play an important role in the agrarian economy, particularly as dealers in horses and other livestock. In early modern times Friesland was a leading supplier of cavalry horses, and the prominent role of Jews in their export to the German states affected the strategic conduct of the great wars against Louis XIV between 1672 and 1713. In November 1691, in the middle of the War of the Grand Alliance (1688–97), when Spain was the Republic's ally against France, Governor-General Gastanaga of the Spanish Netherlands lodged a vehement complaint with the States General in The Hague about the large number of horses being bought up by Jews, especially in Friesland, Groningen, and Overijssel, for export to Germany. Brussels accused the Jews of delivering many of these horses to their coreligionists in Metz, whence, it was said, they were sold to the French army, in

³⁶ H. Kooger, 'Joods leven in Gendringen', *StR* 19 (1985), 243–8: 243–4.

 $^{^{37}}$ J. J. F. W. van Agt, 'De Joodse gemeente van Nijmegen and de achttiende-eeuwse synagoge in de Nonnenstraat', StR_3 (1969), 168-92:175-6.

³⁸ H. Beem, *De Joden van Leeuwarden*, 2 vols. (Assen, 1974), 2–4, 10; S. van der Woude, *Joods leven in Friesland* (Gorredijk, 2010), 25, 30, 51.

accordance with an alleged agreement to supply the French cavalry with 25,000 horses that year. The governor-general demanded that the Dutch authorities put an end to 'ce pernicieux traficq'.³⁹

Within the province it was chiefly the States and the municipal authorities that had the say in internal affairs and were responsible in the main for the policy regulating Jewish settlement. The situation was quite different in the Generality Lands (regions under the direct control of the States General and not fully integrated into the Republic's territory until 1796): States-Brabant (now North Brabant), States-Flanders (now Zeeland-Flanders), Maastricht, Overmaas, Venlo, Roermond, and Westerwolde. Here the federal parliament, the States General, as the sovereign power and the federal Council of State, controlled the administration and the many garrisons which the Republic had established in these regions. The general exclusion of Jews from garrison and other towns, as well as from rural areas in these parts, must therefore be attributed mainly to the policy of the States General and not to that of local administrations.

In contrast to the majority of the population of the Seven Provinces, that of the Generality Lands was mainly Catholic and felt little loyalty towards what it regarded as a Protestant republic. The policy of the Dutch authorities in the Generality Lands was aimed consistently at eroding the predominance of Catholicism, and particularly at establishing the official primacy of the Reformed Church in the Netherlands. The Reformed Church owned all the great churches (except in Maastricht) and its members dominated the civic administration and policy. But though both the Council of State and the municipalities wanted nothing more than to limit the influence of the Catholics, it was never their intention to do so by encouraging religious groups other than the Reformed. The Dutch state itself was thus responsible in these regions for keeping not only the settlement of Jews but also that of Lutherans, Remonstrants, and Mennonites to a minimum. In the event, the official exclusion of Jews from the towns and the rural areas in the Generality Lands lasted for much longer than in the Seven Provinces, in many cases until well after 1750. 40 Until 1767, for instance, Jews were forbidden to live in Tilburg, while as late as 1785, in the middle of the Patriots' revolution, Maastricht was still trying to perpetuate the exclusion of the Jews. The Dutch census of 1809 revealed that the Jewish community accounted for less than 1 per cent of the total population in almost every centre in the Generality Lands ('s-Hertogenbosch, Breda, Grave, Venlo, Roermond, and Hulst), and for very little more in Bergen op Zoom and Maastricht.41

 $^{^{39}}$ State Archives, The Hague, States General $_{7087/II}$. Gastanaga to the States General, Brussels, 29 Nov. 1691.

⁴⁰ Reijnders, Van 'joodsche Natiën', 158–9; B. W. de Vries, From Pedlars to Textile Barons (Amsterdam, 1989), 32.

⁴¹ J. A. de Kok, Nederland op de breuklijn Rome-reformatie (Assen, 1964), 430–47.

The Burgeoning of Commerce and of the Credit System, 1648–1713

It is clear that the Jewish population of the minor provinces was still very small at the end of the seventeenth century, while the Ashkenazim in the province of Holland only just outnumbered the 3,000 or so Sephardim who lived there at the time (see Table 3.1). The Sephardi population of Amsterdam continued to grow after 1700 until about 1735, when it reached over 4,000. In 1690 Gregorio Leti calculated that there were 1,400 Jewish families in the United Netherlands, which corresponds to an estimated Jewish population of some 8,400. This used to be considered an underestimate, but in the light of modern research Leti's figures seem to be the best and most accurate estimate of the size of the Jewish population in the Netherlands at the end of the seventeenth century, although the second figure may be slightly too high. In 1700 the Jewish population of Amsterdam had risen to about 6,200 (approximately 3 per cent of the total population of the city).

Although Ashkenazim outnumbered Sephardim during the last quarter of the century, there was still a wide gulf in terms of prosperity, economic importance, and social standing between the two communities. Unlike the Sephardim, the Ashkenazim could boast no more than a handful of financiers and merchants of any importance. A clear indication of the difference can be found in the registers of assessed wealth compiled in connection with the '200th penny' tax (the 0.5 per cent levy on assessed wealth), introduced in Amsterdam in 1674. That year the register contained the names of 246 Portuguese Jews with assets of 1,000 guilders or more, but of only a dozen Ashkenazim of similar wealth, or 5 per cent of the Sephardi total.⁴⁴

In the last quarter of the seventeenth century there was in fact just one Ashkenazi family in the Republic—the descendants of Gompert Salomon—which played a part in international transactions and high finance comparable to that of leading Sephardi merchants and financiers. The Ashkenazi with the highest tax assessment by the Amsterdam authorities in 1674 was Reuben Gompertz, whose assets were valued at 3,000 guilders (or 0.177 per cent of the largest Sephardi fortune on the register, that of Antonio Lopes Suasso). With his many relatives, Gompertz formed part of a financial network that, with Cleves as the original family base, provided a link between Amsterdam and various towns in the east of the Republic.

The founder of the family fortune and the patriarch of this exceptionally prosperous Ashkenazi family was Gompert Salomon, who in the 1620s and 1630s had acquired a fortune from the sale of spirits and tobacco to the soldiers of the Dutch garrisons in

⁴² H. Nusteling, *Welvaart en werkgelegenheid*, *Amsterdam 1540–1860* (Amsterdam, 1985), 238–9; id., 'The Jews in the Republic of the United Provinces: Origin, Numbers and Dispersion', in J. Israel and R. Salverda (eds.), *Dutch Jewry and Secular Culture* (1500–2000) (Leiden, 2002), 45–57: 53, 56.

⁴⁴ A. M. Vaz Dias, 'Over den vermogenstoestand der Amsterdamsche Joden in de 17e en 18e eeuw', *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis*, 51 (1936), 165–76: 169–70.

Table 3.1 Growth of the Sewish population of Amsterdam, 1010–1773 (estimates)					
	Year	Sephardim	Ashkenazim	Total	% of population
	1610	350	0	350	0.40
	1630	900	60	960	0.75
	1650	1,400	1,000	2,400	1.40
	1675	2,230	1,830	4,060	2.00
	1700	3,000	3,200	6,200	3.00
	1725	4,000	9,000	13,000	6.00
	1750	3,000	14,000	17,000	8.50
	1795	_	_	20,335	10.50

Table 3.1 Growth of the Jewish population of Amsterdam, 1610–1795 (estimates)

Sources: I now fully agree with Kaplan and Nusteling (and Gregorio Leti) that the figures previously given by Bloom and myself (Israel, European Jewry, 164, 241) have to be reduced drastically; see M. Wolff, 'De eerste vestiging der Joden in Amsterdam, hun politiek en economisch toestand', Bijdragen voor vaderlandsche geschiedenis en oudheidkunde, 4th ser., 9 (1910), 365–400: 377, 379; Reijnders, Van Joodsche Natiën, 69, 77; S. Hart, Geschrift en getal (Dordrecht, 1976), 120, 125, 185; Kaplan, 'Amsterdam and the Ashkenazic Migration', 44; Kaplan, 'Portuguese Community', 35; Nusteling, Welvaart en werkgelegenheid, 22–4, 238–9. For the compilation of the table I am greatly indebted to Nusteling's persuasive analysis, for which see also H. P. H. Nusteling, 'The Jews in the Republic of the United Provinces: Origin, Numbers and Dispersion', in J. Israel and R. Salverda (eds.), Dutch Jewry and Secular Culture (1500–2000) (Leiden, 2002), 45–57: 52. Even so, it is likely that these figures are now somewhat too low as they probably take insufficient account of the growing number of paupers; see T. Levie Bernfeld, Poverty and Welfare among the Portuguese Jews in Early Modern Amsterdam (Oxford, 2012), 61.

Cleves. He was the acknowledged leader and rabbi of the Cleves Jewish community, and had settled with his family in Emmerich, just to the south of the Dutch border enclave of Bergh. During the second half of the seventeenth century Gompert's descendants (later adopting the name of Gompertz) became well known at the German courts and acted as buyers of military supplies, especially for the elector of Brandenburg. In addition to providing credit and loans, Jews at the German courts engaged in two major activities. One was dealing in military supplies, and the other was the purchase of precious stones, especially diamonds. For both enterprises, contacts in the Netherlands were of great importance, and the Amsterdam firm of Reuben and Moses Gompertz was active in both fields.

An interesting example of their involvement in international affairs was the link between the Gompertz family and those English Whigs who, following the discovery of the Rye House plot against Charles II in 1683, had escaped from England to the Continent. A group of these Whig conspirators in exile—obliged to reside outside the official borders of the Republic, and including Forde, Lord Grey—set up headquarters

⁴⁵ F. (Yitzhak) Baer, Das Protokollbuch der Landjudenschaft des Herzogtums Kleve (Berlin, 1936), 13–18, 57, 64–9.

in a tavern in Cleves called the Court of Holland. The plot leading up to the Monmouth rebellion was in part laid here. Grey was one of James Scott Monmouth's main confederates and maintained a network of financial contacts with Gompertz in Cleves and in the Republic. The duke of Monmouth himself and several other conspirators pawned their jewels in Amsterdam shortly before the uprising in the west of England in order to buy guns, pikes, and ammunition, which were then shipped to the rebel area. The firm of Gompertz in Amsterdam was directly involved in several of these transactions. Monmouth and Grey landed in England (from Texel) and managed to mount a rebellion in the West Country, but were crushed at Sedgemoor by the king's army. After the Monmouth rebellion had been put down, James II's spies reported to him that the jewels belonging to the duke, who had meanwhile been executed, were in the possession of 'Moses Gompertz, a rich Jew dwelling in Amsterdam . . . related . . . to a Maria [Elias?] Gompertz and another vastly rich Jew [Reuben Gompertz?] now dwelling in the city of Cleve, who was lately much concerned with the contacts with Lord Grey and now stands security for nursing his child having had security deposited in Amsterdam'.46

During the first quarter of the eighteenth century the Ashkenazi elite in the Republic improved its economic position, and a few more Ashkenazi families ventured into international affairs and state finance. The Gompertz family, however, remained the most prominent. In Nijmegen the banker Baruch Levi Gompertz, who had settled there in 1702, was the leading figure. In 1725 he assisted the States of Holland in negotiating the purchase of the autonomous enclave of Vianen from the count of Lippe-Detmold. If Dutch Ashkenazi Jewry was never as hegemonic or central in the life of western Ashkenazi Jewry generally as Dutch Sephardi Jewry was in the life of the western Sephardi world, it nevertheless played a distinctive and formative economic and cultural role from the end of the seventeenth century onwards when the growth of the Ashkenazi community in Amsterdam began to accelerate, and soon (shortly before 1700) rapidly to outstrip the Sephardi community.⁴⁷ Amsterdam was the heart of Hebrew printing and book production for both Jewish worlds, and the prime intellectual intersection point where the Ashkenazi and Sephardi worlds met each other. For Ashkenazi or Sephardi scholars wanting to learn about the other community, and to read its rabbinic writings, philosophy, scientific studies and literature, Amsterdam was undoubtedly the place to be. Amsterdam was also, of course, the centre of Yiddish book production and diffusion for the entire Ashkenazi world.

The next most notable Ashkenazi family engaged in Dutch trade and finance was unquestionably the Boas family in The Hague. They came to prominence thanks to the business acumen of Hyman Boas (1662–1742), who had settled in The Hague in 1701. He specialized in precious stones and gold, two of the three pillars (tobacco was the third)

⁴⁶ British Library, Add. MS 4181, fo. 265. Information supplied to Lord Middleton. The Hague, 10 July 1695.

⁴⁷ Nusteling, Jews in the Republic, 54.

of Ashkenazi business activities in the Republic until the end of the eighteenth century. Hyman's son, Tobias Boas (1696–1782), for decades the leading Jewish figure in The Hague, became one of the most prosperous merchants and bankers in the Netherlands. It almost goes without saying that he married his children to members of the Gompertz family and other prominent German Jewish bankers' families such as Oppenheim, Wertheimer, and Kann from Frankfurt. In the years 1744 and 1745 Tobias took the initiative, in the name of the Dutch Jewish leaders, in drafting a petition to the States General protesting against the expulsion of Jews from Prague by the Austrian empress Maria Theresa.

While Ashkenazim forged ever closer links with central Europe in the pursuit of their varied economic activities, not least the export of imported gemstones, the Sephardim were more inclined to direct their attention elsewhere in the world, as one important phase of Dutch commercial supremacy followed the next. In the main there were three such shifts. 48 From the start of their commercial role in Amsterdam at the end of the sixteenth century until the rebellion of the Portuguese Catholic planters in Netherlands Brazil in 1645, Portugal and its colonial empire, and above all Brazil, were at the centre of Sephardi business concerns. From 1647, when the Spanish embargo was lifted, until the War of the Spanish Succession (1702-13), Sephardi interest moved chiefly to Spain, Spanish America, and the transit trade with the Spanish colonies via Curação. At the same time increasing importance was being attached to financial services within the Republic, and especially to share and property dealing and to military contracts. After 1713 the elite of the Sephardi business world gradually withdrew from active trading and relied increasingly on finance, particularly on the investment of funds in colonial shares, Dutch provincial bonds, and the Bank of England. Where Sephardi merchants continued to play an active part in overseas trade, they transferred their attention from the Spanish empire to London, the British, French, and Dutch colonies in the Caribbean area, Guyana, and North America. The first half of the eighteenth century was the golden age of Dutch Sephardi settlement in Curação and Surinam, which at that time were by far the largest and most important Jewish communities in the New World.

Two of the most remarkable figures in Dutch Sephardi commerce and finance during the first half of the seventeenth century—and also two of the leading personalities in communal life—were Bento (Baruch) Osorio and Lopo Ramires (David Curiel). Osorio was for many years believed to be the wealthiest Jew in the United Netherlands, and was for a long time engaged in commerce with Portugal. During the Twelve Years Truce he acted as the northern representative of Andrea Lopes Pinto, the New Christian salt exporter in Lisbon, and between 1615 and 1618 he chartered more than 200 Dutch ships for the transport of salt from the Portuguese salt pans, particularly from Setubal, to Holland, Zeeland, Dunkirk, and the Baltic countries.

⁴⁸ Israel, Empires and Entrepots, 383-6, 399, 437-44.

Osorio was also the leading Jewish investor in the Dutch West India Company (WIC) during its early years, to the tune of 6,000 guilders, a large sum at the time.⁴⁹

Like most other prominent Sephardi merchants in Amsterdam, Osorio traded mainly with Portugal, and through that country with the Portuguese colonial empire. It would seem he was not a great advocate of Portugal's separation from Spain in 1640–1, and after 1645, like the majority of the Dutch Sephardim, he became a declared opponent of the Portuguese cause and the Portuguese Crown because of their support for the Catholic Portuguese settlers during the rebellion against Dutch rule (and Jewish trade) in North Brazil, a rebellion that threatened the entire network built up by Sephardi merchants.

Even Lopo Ramires, who in the early 1640s had fully backed the Portuguese cause, ceased to show interest after 1645-6. Having fled from Portugal in 1611 to avoid imminent arrest by the Inquisition and having settled in Amsterdam in 1614, Ramires long remained a prominent Jewish merchant in Amsterdam. As a specialist in the gem trade he imported rough diamonds from Goa via Lisbon for cutting and polishing in Amsterdam; in addition he also engaged in various forms of trade with Portugal and its colonies, though, unlike Osorio, he was only occasionally involved in the shipping of salt. In 1641, when Portuguese seaports were officially opened to Dutch shipping and John IV, proclaimed king of Portugal at the end of 1640, sent an envoy to The Hague asking for Dutch support in his struggle against Spain and for the maintenance of Portuguese independence (a struggle that was to last until 1668), Ramires was one of those who carried the risk of extending sizeable credits to the Portuguese Crown. In July 1641 he signed a contract with the Portuguese envoy by which he agreed to ship firearms, gunpowder, ammunition, and siege guns to Portugal to the value of 100,000 cruzados.50 As a reward he was, among other things, knighted and given the title of cavaleiro fidalgo (noble knight) of Portugal (although he was not allowed to return to Portugal because he was a Jew). After 1645 Ramires abandoned the Portuguese and concentrated on his contacts with the Spanish rulers in Brussels. In the 1650s, following a quarrel with the Mahamad in Amsterdam, he took up residence in Antwerp, living there as a practising Jew. Later on he resided in Middelburg and in Rotterdam.

After 1645 relations between the Republic and Portugal gradually deteriorated, to reach their nadir with the Dutch–Portuguese War (1657–61). But by that time Portugal had ceased to be the linchpin of Dutch Sephardi trade, and had come to assume no more than secondary importance in the commercial world of Dutch Jewry. After

⁴⁹ H. Wätjen, *Das Judentum und die Anfange der modernen Kolonisation* (Berlin, 1913), 32–3; further on Bento Osorio, see J. Roitman, *The Same but Different? Inter-Cultural Trade and the Sephardim*, 1595–1640 (Leiden, 2011), 88–90, 117–18, 127–9, 138–43, 165–9, 191–8, 208–12, 255–9.

⁵⁰ Stadsarchief Amsterdam, Notarieel Archief 1555B, 1103–1104; see also V. Rau, 'A embaixada de Tristao de Mendonfa Furtado e os arquivos notarais holandeses', *Anais da Academia Portuguesa da História*, 2nd ser. 7 (1958), 93–160: 115–16.

1647–8, Spain and Spanish America, together with the Caribbean, were increasingly the main target of the commercial activities of the Dutch Sephardim, a situation that continued until the War of the Spanish Succession (1702–13) and the consequent decline of all Dutch trade with Spain and its overseas empire. Curação became the active hub of the Dutch trading system in the Caribbean area, and for the contraband trade with the Spanish American mainland, not after 1670, as has been claimed, but rather during the later 1650s and 1660s. While the WIC controlled the post-1660 slave trade to Spanish America via Curação, the Sephardi merchant community of Willemstad specialized principally in the small boat coastal traffic in contraband goods to nearby Coro, Tucacas, and Maracaibo, thus mainly with what today is coastal western Venezuela. Despite the 'rigid and even hostile reception', as Yosef Kaplan expressed it, that they encountered from the Protestant Dutch merchant elite and officials, the community flourished both economically and culturally.⁵²

The lifting of the embargo on Dutch shipping and goods in 1647, and the signing of the peace treaty between the Netherlands and Spain at Münster in 1648, ushered in a completely new era in the history of relations between the two countries and was to have a salutary effect on the trade, demographic development, and secular culture of Dutch Sephardim. Shortly after the peace was concluded, the Amsterdam city council, at the request of the Mahamad, urged the States of Holland and the States General to exert pressure on the Spanish Crown to legalize Dutch Jewish trade with Spain and the Spanish empire, and to declare goods exported by Dutch Jewish merchants immune from confiscation by the Inquisition. In July 1650 King Philip IV (1621–65) promptly gave his fiat, and informed the States General through his newly appointed ambassador in The Hague that he now gave permission for Dutch Jews to engage legally in trade with Spain and, through Seville and Cadiz, with Spanish America, provided only that they did not set foot on Iberian soil. They would have to channel their trade through agents of 'another religion', which meant Catholics or resident foreign Protestants.⁵³ Amsterdam then tried to have these concessions extended, and in November 1650 the king also agreed, in the case of shipwreck and other disasters at sea, to grant Jewish subjects of the States General temporary access to 'the seaports of my realm both in Spain and in Italy . . . on condition they are neither baptized Christians [who had reverted to

⁵¹ Israel, Empires and Entrepots, 383–415, 433.

⁵² W. W. Klooster, *Illicit Riches: The Dutch Trade in the Caribbean*, 1648–1795 (Leiden, 1995), 61, 156–9; for the earlier trajectory, see J. Israel, 'Curaçao, Amsterdam, and the Rise of the Sephardi Trade System in the Caribbean, 1630–1700', in J. S. Gerber (ed.), *The Jews in the Caribbean* (Oxford, 2014), 29–43; see also Roitman, 'Creating Confusion', 65–7; J. Roitman, 'A Flock of Wolves instead of Sheep": The Dutch West India Company, Conflict Resolution, and the Jewish Community of Curaçao in the Eighteenth Century', in Gerber (ed.), *The Jews in the Caribbean*, 85–105: 86–7. Klooster agrees that the Jews in Curaçao did not play a major role in the slave trade; see W. Klooster, 'The Jews in Suriname and Curaçao', in Bernardini and Fiering (eds.), *Jews and the Expansion of Europe*, 356. See also Gerber (ed.), *The Jews in the Caribbean*.

⁵³ Israel, Empires and Entrepots, 386–8.

Judaism] nor my [former] subjects, because, as is known, the Jews were expelled from Spain by the Catholic Kings and have since been debarred from this country'.⁵⁴

Leading figures among the Dutch Sephardim in the second half of the seventeenth century included Jacob Delmonte, Jerónimo Nunes da Costa, Antonio and Francisco Lopes Suasso, and Manuel de Belmonte. These men, together with some members of the very wealthy De Pinto and Pereira families, constituted the cream of the Dutch Sephardi elite. Delmonte came to the fore in the 1650s as one of the leading importers of high-quality Spanish wool. In July 1650 he and two other Sephardi merchants in Amsterdam chartered a ship to fetch 600 bags of wool from Santander, half of them paid for by Delmonte; that same month he also chartered another vessel to fetch 650 more bags, including 400 paid for by himself.55 If it is borne in mind that the leading producer of wool cloth in the Republic, the Leiden textile industry, had become Europe's largest consumer of Spanish wool and that the total annual wool exports from Spain to northern Europe amounted to about 25,000 bags, then the fact that Delmonte shipped 700 bags in one month alone demonstrates that his role in the Spanish and Dutch economies was one of some importance. Among the leading Sephardi shareholders in the Dutch West India Company in 1647, Delmonte, with an investment of 30,000 guilders, came fourth after Antonio Lopes Suasso (107,667 guilders), Jerónimo Nunes da Costa (46,000 guilders), and Jacob del Pinto (42,000 guilders).⁵⁶ Among the 246 Sephardim assessed for the '200th penny' in 1674, Delmonte's widow took seventh place with 87,000 guilders, behind Lopes Suasso, the widow of Lopo Ramires (117,000 guilders), and members of the De Pinto family.⁵⁷ After his first term in the Mahamad in 1645 as gabai (treasurer), Delmonte (under his synagogue name of Jacob del Sotto) served again on this council of elders, clearly as a leading figure, in 1654, 1660, 1664, and 1669.

Jerónimo Nunes da Costa (Moseh Curiel) (1620–97) was the eldest son of Duarte Nunes da Costa (Jacob Curiel), agent of the Portuguese Crown and a prominent member of the Sephardi community in Hamburg (Plate II). His father was an elder brother of Lopo Ramires. Jerónimo grew up in his father's house and came to Amsterdam in 1642. Unlike his uncle, but like his father, he was a fervent champion of Portuguese independence from Spain, and in 1645 King John IV appointed him *chargé d'affaires* (agent) of the Portuguese Crown in the United Netherlands, ⁵⁸ a semi-diplomatic post

⁵⁴ Israel, Empires and Entrepots, 388.

⁵⁵ J. I. Israel, 'Some Further Data on the Amsterdam Sephardim and their Trade with Spain during the 1650s', StR 14 (1980), 7–19: 17.

⁵⁶ N. H. Schneeloch, Aktionäre der Westindischen Compagnie von 1674 (Stuttgart, 1982), 32–4.

⁵⁷ Vaz Dias, 'Over den vermogenstoestand', 170.

⁵⁸ For Nunes da Costa, see D. Swetschinski, 'An Amsterdam Jewish Merchant Diplomat: Jeronimo Nunes da Costa alias Moseh Curiel (1620–1692)', in L. Dasberg and J. N. Cohen (eds.), *Neveh Ya'akov: Jubilee Volume Presented to Dr. Jaap Meijer* (Assen, 1982), 3–30; J. I. Israel, 'The Diplomatic Career of Jeronimo Nunes da Costa', *BMGN* 98 (1983), 167–90.

that eventually exempted him from paying taxes in the Republic, and also from the '200th penny' tax when it was introduced in 1674. Like his father and his uncle, he was knighted by the Portuguese king and appointed *cavaleiro fidalgo*. In contrast to the rest of the Dutch Sephardi elite, Jerónimo continued to trade mainly with Portugal, Brazil, the Azores, São Tomé, and other parts of the Portuguese overseas empire throughout his long commercial career. Although a specialist in diamonds, he dealt in many other goods, regularly importing figs from the Algarve and tobacco and sugar from Brazil.

The wealth of all these patricians was exceeded by that of Antonio Lopes Suasso (1614–85; PLATE 13) and his son Francisco (c.1657–1710). 59 Antonio, who later took the synagogue name of Isaac Israel Suasso, grew up in a Portuguese New Christian family in Bordeaux. In 1635, at the age of 39, he went to Rotterdam to marry Rachel de Pinto, the daughter of Abraham de Pinto, from whom he received the princely sum of 130,000 guilders as dowry. He also returned formally to Judaism at this time and established his flourishing business in Amsterdam. Until 1672 Lopes Suasso imported wool from Spain, often in partnership with Delmonte, and then went on to trade in other goods, including diamonds. Later, however, he largely retired from active trading, devoted himself increasingly to high finance, and proved to be one of the shrewdest investors on the Amsterdam stock exchange. From 1673 onwards he was the chief financial agent in Amsterdam of the Spanish Crown (at that time an ally of the Republic against France), and played an important role in arranging loans and transfers of money enabling the king of Spain, Charles II (1665–1700), to pay his, by now considerably scaled-down, army in the Southern Netherlands. In January 1676 Antonio Lopes Suasso was knighted by the Spanish king and given leave to purchase the barony of Avernas-le-Gras in the Southern Netherlands.

Antonio's oldest son, Don Francisco Lopes Suasso, second baron of Avernas-le-Gras (alias Abraham Israel Suasso), inherited his father's title and half his fortune, which consisted largely of shares in the Dutch East India Company (Verenigde Oostin-dische Compagnie, the VOC), with a nominal value of 129,000 guilders, worth 650,000 guilders on the stock exchange at the time. His financial resources and prestige were increased further in 1682 by his marriage to Jeudit Teixeira, daughter of Manuel de Teixeira de Sampaio, a merchant and financier, who since his arrival in Hamburg from Antwerp in the late 1640s had been by far the richest member of the Sephardi community in that town. Don Francisco continued his father's close relations with the Spanish administration in Brussels. During the War of the Grand Alliance (1688–97), in which Spain was again the ally of the Republic against France, but had great difficulties in provisioning and paying its army in the Low Countries, Lopes Suasso made a crucial contribution: through his intervention, the creaking wheels of Charles's army finances were helped to run smoothly again. In the summer of 1696 the governor-general in

⁵⁹ For Lopes Suasso, see D. Swetschinski and L. Schönduve, *De familie Lopes Suasso: Financiers van Willem III* (Zwolle, 1988).

Brussels reported to Madrid that a disaster had been averted, thanks exclusively to Lopes Suasso's *galanteria* in procuring large sums of money when no other financier had been prepared to do so. Lopes Suasso collaborated closely at the same time with the government of Stadtholder William III (William of Orange) and with the States General. He played an active part at various stages in financing the invasion of England launched by William III in 1688, and the ensuing Glorious Revolution; he not only helped with the direct costs, but through his father-in-law in Hamburg also procured the finances needed for the first payments to, and the marching costs of, 6,000 Swedish auxiliary troops hired by the States General in order to strengthen the land defences of the Republic against the French.⁶⁰

Much as Jerónimo Nunes da Costa had acted for decades as agent for the Portuguese Crown in the Seven Provinces, and was succeeded after his death by his second son, Alexandre, and then by his youngest son, Alvaro Nunes da Costa (d. 1738), so his counterpart, Don Manuel de Belmonte (d. 1705), acted for the Spanish Crown. Belmonte was part of the wave of New Christian immigrants from Spain which got under way when Spain and the Republic made peace, and he had settled in Amsterdam in about 1656. The first Sephardi agent of the Spanish Crown in Amsterdam was his brother, Andrés de Belmonte, who on 20 March 1663 was appointed to that post by the governor-general in Brussels but died an untimely death in 1666. Belmonte's original title of 'agent' was upgraded by Charles II in February 1673 to residente. His role as intermediary between Spain and the Republic, when both countries joined an alliance against France in 1673, was of such importance to the Spanish Crown that he was rewarded with the title of baron in June 1693. The relevant document recalls that Belmonte had already rendered twenty-eight years' service, regularly dispatching political, diplomatic, and military intelligence to Brussels and Madrid, and providing various special services, for instance his not inconsiderable part in organizing the Dutch fleet under Michiel de Ruyter, which was dispatched to Sicily in 1675 to help Spain defend that island against the French. 61 Just like Nunes da Costa, Belmonte often acted as Spanish chargé d'affaires in The Hague when the Crown he served did not have a resident ambassador in the Republic. Belmonte's elegant house at 586 Herengracht in Amsterdam was frequently the scene of aristocratic gatherings. 62 Spanish ambassadors to the Republic stayed there regularly during visits to Amsterdam.

Belmonte was not as zealous as Nunes da Costa in working for the Jewish community, and contemporaries observed that his house was some distance from the Jewish quarter. Nevertheless, under his synagogue name of Ishac Nunes Belmonte and at an advanced age, he served several times on the Mahamad, in 1698 and again in 1701 to 1704. The last period provides an interesting example of the sensitive policy pursued

⁶⁰ Swetschinski and Schönduve, *De familie Lopes Suasso*, 50; J. I. Israel, *The Anglo-Dutch Moment: Essays on the Glorious Revolution and Its World Impact* (Cambridge, 1991), 440–4, 450, 108–9.

⁶¹ Swetschinksi, 'The Portuguese Jewish Merchants', 261, 270.

⁶² Israel, 'Gregorio Leti', 272-7.

by the Amsterdam Sephardi community in international affairs: these were the early years of the War of the Spanish Succession, a time when it was held of vital importance to have the community's leading expert on Spain and its policy near the helm. The Mahamad had in any case long been used to calling on Belmonte's help in matters concerning the Sephardi community as a whole in the Netherlands and in its colonies across the Atlantic Ocean. In 1681 the Mahamad appointed him and Nunes da Costa permanent 'deputados representing the [Portuguese Jewish] nation before the gentlemen of the magistrature both in the city of The Hague and elsewhere, in respect of the general affairs of the nation as trusted mediators of this holy congregation'. In that capacity, the two interceded on various occasions in the name of Sephardi congregations in the New World with the West India Company, with Amsterdam burgomasters, and with foreign governments. Thus in a letter to Louis XIV in 1682 Nunes da Costa pleaded—in vain—in favour of the Jews of Martinique, who were on the point of being expelled by the French Crown.⁶³ After the Jamaican parliament passed a law in December 1695 imposing a special levy on the Jews of that island, 'over, above, and beyond' that demanded from other white settlers, Belmonte interceded on their behalf with Stadtholder-King William III in London, albeit once again to no avail.⁶⁴

Two other leading members of the Sephardi mercantile elite in the Netherlands were Antonio Alvares (Moseh) Machado (d. 1697) and Jacob Pereira (b. 1629), partners in the firm of Machado and Pereira, which for a long time from 1672 played a remarkable role as purveyors and provisioners to the States General and William III. In 1672, the 'year of disaster', the Republic was nearly overrun by Louis XIV and his allies. In what seemed a hopeless situation, the Dutch stadtholder made desperate attempts to hold the last line of defence; as he confided in October of that year in a letter to one of his senior officers, Count Johan Maurits van Nassau-Siegen, the former governorgeneral of Brazil, he was completely dependent on Machado and Pereira for the 'fournissement de pain pour nostre armée'. 65 Subsequently, too, the firm retained its lead over other companies, William continuing to rely on it to equip his armies throughout his military—and later royal—career, both inside the Republic itself and also later in his campaigns in Flanders—with field kitchens, bread, wagons, horses, and other necessities. Machado and Pereira's military contracts, which later also covered the provisioning of the English troops serving in the army of the stadtholder-king in Flanders,66 were by their nature extensive transactions which involved large-scale purchases and transports over great distances. They provided a good number of Sephardim and Ashkenazim, but also Christians, with work as agents, clerks, and other

⁶³ A. Cohen, 'Les juifs de la Martinique au xviie siècle', Revue des études juives, 2 (1981), 93-122: 106.

⁶⁴ J. A. P. M. Andrade, A Record of the Jews in Jamaica (Kingston, 1941), 9–10.

⁶⁵ N. Japikse (ed.), Correspondentie van Willem III en van Hans Willem Bentinck, 2 parts in 5 vols. (The Hague, 1927–37), pt. II, vol. i, p. 122.

⁶⁶ For that reason, his gravestone in Ouderkerk proclaimed Machado 'provedor general de Inglaterra e Holanda'; see L. A. Vega, *Het Beth Haim van Ouderkerk* (Assen, 1975), 44.

staff. Many of the horses the firm supplied to Flanders came from Friesland and Groningen, no doubt often through Ashkenazi horse-dealers. During the preparations for the invasion of England in 1688, Pereira was in fact responsible for provisioning the Amsterdam squadron, the largest section of the enormous armada assembled by the States General and the stadtholder.⁶⁷ At the same time the firm was charged with supplying the Dutch forces concentrated in the fortifications on the eastern borders in order to thwart any French attempts at intervention.

Machado and Pereira, like Belmonte, Lopes Suasso, and Nunes da Costa, were Sephardi patricians, great financiers, and prominent personalities—men who had many and frequent contacts with leading political, diplomatic, and military officials in the Republic and elsewhere. Their employees, too, were Jews, but most other Jews involved in financial transactions and services in the United Netherlands operated on a much more modest scale and generally in the close vicinity of the Amsterdam stock exchange, though occasionally also as agents in Rotterdam or Middelburg.

After 1672 the overseas commercial activities of Dutch Sephardim began to decline, as members of the community increasingly abandoned active trading for brokering in commerce and shipping. In 1643 the Amsterdam municipality recorded that thirty out of the 430 registered brokers in the city were Jews. In 1657 that ratio had gone up to fifty in 500. The registered brokers were, however, no more than the tip of the iceberg; a much larger number played subsidiary roles or acted as unofficial brokers. Some of them confined themselves to valuing and classifying tobacco, spices, Spanish wool, silk, or currants, goods that came in many categories, qualities, and stages of production and finish; others concentrated on matching buyers and sellers, or arranging cargo space and maritime insurance. These were the go-betweens, the middlemen in what was then the world's largest staple market.

An important speciality of Jewish brokers and traders from 1670 onwards, perhaps even earlier, was dealing in the shares of the Dutch East India Company and the West India Company. A rudimentary stock exchange (the first in Europe) had made an appearance in Amsterdam at the beginning of the seventeenth century and, during the last quarter of that century and the greater part of the eighteenth until the collapse of the Republic in 1795, played an extremely important—and by historians often underestimated—role in the economic, financial, and fashionable life of the Netherlands. The exchange was rudimentary in so far as it lacked a fixed meeting-place and the trade largely eluded the control of the city council; brokers and speculators met in coffee houses near the commodity exchange or in the Jewish quarter, evaluated overseas reports, fixed prices, and bought or sold the shares that accounted for a large (and growing) part of the prosperity of society. All reports agree that at the end of the

⁶⁷ Israel, The Anglo-Dutch Moment, 352, 440.

⁶⁸ H. I. Bloom, The Economic Activities of the Jews in Amsterdam in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries (1937; 2nd edn., Port Washington, NY, 1969), 183.

seventeenth century these activities were dominated by Jews, who before 1700 were almost always Sephardim.⁶⁹ They acted as specialist buyers and vendors on behalf of Dutch regents, Christian merchants and shopkeepers, and sometimes on behalf of foreign noblemen.

The first detailed account to be published anywhere in the world of the operations of a stock exchange was by one of Amsterdam's leading secular Sephardi writers, Joseph Penso de la Vega (1650–93). His famous Confusión de Confusiones (1688), written in highly literary and often obscure Spanish, probably intended exclusively for Sephardi readers and dedicated to the eldest son of Jerónimo Nunes da Costa, conveys a graphic picture of the excitement and dangers of the often risky and speculative trade on the stock exchange. 70 In the last part of his book, Penso de la Vega describes the great crash of the Amsterdam stock exchange in the autumn of 1688, shortly before the Dutch invasion of England. Apart from the collapse of 1672, it was perhaps the gravest financial crisis for Amsterdam in the entire seventeenth century, an event that wiped out enormous private fortunes and produced a wave of hostile feelings towards Jewish stockbrokers.⁷¹ Another point that clearly emerges in Penso de la Vega's account is the close link between the specialization of Sephardim on the Amsterdam stock market and the unrivalled ability of the Dutch Sephardi community to obtain news from distant parts in a quick and efficient manner, often more quickly than the Dutch and English diplomatic services.

As this efficient transcontinental news-gathering capability illustrates, despite the decline in Dutch Sephardi overseas commerce, Amsterdam continued to be a kind of communications, information, and cultural capital for the entire western Sephardi transatlantic world down to the eighteenth century, even in relation to the rapidly growing Sephardi community of London, which still largely deferred to Amsterdam usages and the Amsterdam model until around 1700.⁷²

During the first half of the eighteenth century stockbrokering and share-dealing remained key sectors of Jewish economic activity in Amsterdam. Furthermore, a growing number of Ashkenazim gradually found a place in what had, to all intents and purposes, been a Sephardi preserve. But once again there were dramatic and alarming moments. The second time that a massive collapse of the share market led to growing anti-Jewish sentiments was the crash of 1720, following a wave of feverish speculation

⁶⁹ J. G. van Dillen, *Van rijkdom en regenten* (The Hague, 1970), 455; J. I. Israel, 'The Amsterdam Stock Exchange and the English Revolution of 1688', *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis*, 103 (1990), 412–40: 416–20.

Israel, 'The Amsterdam Stock Exchange', 424, 428–9; J. I. Israel, 'Een merkwaardig literair werk and de Amsterdamse effectenmarkt in 1688: Joseph Penso de la Vega's "Confusión de Confusiones", De zeventiende eeuw, 6 (1990), 159–65.
 Israel, 'The Amsterdam Stock Exchange', 431–3.

⁷² E. Oliel-Grausz, 'A Study in Intercommunal Relations in the Sephardi Diaspora: London and Amsterdam in the Eighteenth Century', in C. Brasz and Y. Kaplan (eds.), *Dutch Jews as Perceived by Themselves and Others: Proceedings of the Eighth International Symposium on the History of the Jews in the Netherlands* (Leiden, 2001), 41–58: 42–4.

in Amsterdam that went hand in hand with a comparably short period of speculative activity in England. During the years before the crash, the quoted prices of VOC and WIC shares had risen to unprecedented heights. Afterwards there were several disturbances in Amsterdam and attacks on Jewish brokers.

Growing Population Figures during the Period of Economic Decline: 1713–1750

The great age of demographic growth among the Ashkenazim, not only in Amsterdam but also in the United Netherlands as a whole, was unquestionably the first half of the eighteenth century, followed after 1750 by much slower growth. During this period Jews spread out into towns in the interior of the Netherlands and into the countryside, at least in the Seven Provinces (that is, outside the Generality Lands). This was also the time when the population in the Sephardi settlements in Curação and Surinam grew to its largest size.

Yet the general demographic expansion, so typical of Jewish life during the first half of the eighteenth century, was not the result—or the reflection—of greater economic success and of a healthier, more balanced labour market and economic structure. On the contrary, the period from 1720 to 1780 was one of general decline (which finally extended even to trade with the East Indies) in almost all areas of the Republic's overseas trade, especially that in luxuries, and in practically all Dutch industries based on exports (with the Schiedam gin distilleries as the great exception).⁷³ The collapse was essentially the consequence of a serious weakening in the Republic's trading position, not only in comparison with Britain and France but also with such new and rising mercantile powers as Sweden, Prussia, and Russia.

However, not all the sectors of trade and industry in which Jews were heavily represented were in decline before 1750. The Surinam sugar plantations in Sephardi ownership, for instance, continued their flourishing existence until the 1770s, when this sector too suffered a chronic slump. But many other commercial and industrial activities, such as trade with Spain and Portugal and the tobacco industry, crumbled after 1720, with disastrous consequences for the welfare and economic prosperity of Dutch Jewry as a whole. Although the Sephardi population in the Republic (excepting the colonies) decreased slightly between 1720 and 1750, mainly as a result of emigration to London or the Caribbean, while the Ashkenazi population increased rapidly, both groups were confronted with a serious and deep-seated general crisis. This was reflected in a combination of diminishing economic prospects, increasing poverty and unemployment, and growing pressure on the community treasurers to provide poor relief.

⁷³ Israel, Dutch Primacy, 377–99.

⁷⁴ R. Cohen, Jews in Another Environment: Surinam in the Second Half of the Eighteenth Century (Leiden, 1991), 66–74.

The Sephardi philosopher Isaac de Pinto (1717–87) underlined the gravity of this social crisis in his first publication, the *Reflexoens Politicas* (1748), pointing out that during the previous twenty-five years the number of Sephardim who paid their contribution to the community had fallen from 629 to 610, while the number of people registered to receive poor relief from the community had risen from 450 to 750. The collapse of the export trade in processed tobacco from the Republic to the rest of Europe was particularly serious for the Sephardi and Ashkenazi communities. The number of tobacco factories in Amsterdam declined from about thirty in 1720 (half of them owned by Jews and employing mostly Jewish labour) to a mere eight in 1751. To

The impressive growth of the Ashkenazi communities during the first half of the eighteenth century was thus by no means a sign of improved economic conditions in the Republic but, on the contrary, a symptom of the nation's economic recession. The steep falling-off in industrial activity in all fields during the eighteenth century had the inevitable result that the size and viability of nearly all towns in the interior, such as Haarlem, Leiden, Delft, Utrecht, Groningen, Zwolle, Deventer, and Kampen, declined, in some cases disastrously. After 1720, during years in which practically all other great European cities grew as never before, Amsterdam experienced a slight fall in population, or at best demographic stagnation. One of the consequences of the crisis in urban life in the Netherlands was that the stream of skilled immigrants from the Southern Netherlands, Liège, and Germany, which had helped to maintain population levels in Dutch towns during the seventeenth century, shrank to a trickle. Another consequence was that municipal authorities proved somewhat more liberal than they had been towards the settlement of Jews, although there were some exceptions, such as Utrecht, which continued to ban Jewish settlement until 1789.

The demographic decline of Dutch towns—a process that began with the major wars between 1688 and 1715 and continued at an accelerated rate after 1720—set Dutch municipalities desperately in search of a remedy. On the one hand, this led them to look more favourably on the admission of Jews than they had done during the Golden Century; on the other, the resulting spread and growth of the Ashkenazi population throughout the Seven Provinces led to serious new economic friction between Jews and other sections of the population. The general dislocation of the economy left no one untouched. The reaction of Christian shopkeepers, traders, and artisans, mostly members of well-established families in the towns, was characteristic: they tried to tighten their grip on the urban market by promulgating stricter rules for the guilds, by founding new guilds, and by excluding outsiders as far as possible from practising a trade or running a shop.

The majority of the breadwinners among the Ashkenazi population, often newly

⁷⁵ Isaac de Pinto, Reflexoens politicas, tocante a constituição da nação Judaica . . . (Amsterdam, 1748), 4–9.

⁷⁶ J. C. Westermann, 'Een memorie van 1751 over de tabaksindustrie and den tabakshandel in de Republiek', *Economisch-Historisch Jaarboek*, 22 (1943), 68–81.

arrived, desperately poor immigrants from Germany or Bohemia, had meanwhile, due to economic pressure and the lack of alternatives, been forced into eking out a living with menial jobs, hawking, begging, and (in a few cases) burglary and theft.⁷⁷ Itinerant Jewish pedlars could be found everywhere, mostly selling old, second-hand, or torn clothes for a pittance, but sometimes dealing in stolen goods. Hawkers and pedlars became the stock Dutch Ashkenazi type at the beginning and in the middle of the eighteenth century, and Ashkenazi Jews also accounted for a significant proportion of the criminal world. The half-hearted attempts by various municipalities to restrict the admission of Jews, allowing a small number in while throwing up a dam against the flood of Jewish hawkers, vagrants, and beggars, rarely had any lasting success. Thus in 1733 the Leiden magistracy, in response to complaints from local shopkeepers, banned Jewish pedlars from selling linen and cotton cloth in the street, but in 1737 the guild concerned complained again that shopkeepers were suffering losses because the Jews were selling goods in the street, going from house to house and 'carrying their wares under their arm' (Plate 14).⁷⁸

In about 1750 the Dutch Sephardi community had clearly fallen behind the Ashkenazim in demographic terms and in the number of congregations and synagogues. At the time the Sephardim in Amsterdam and in several other Sephardi centres in the Republic were in steep decline demographically, economically, and culturally, although their leaders still had considerable personal fortunes. It should be no surprise that around the middle of the century the descendants of the leading Sephardi patricians should have evinced less enthusiasm for membership of the Mahamad and lesser communal offices than had their fathers and grandfathers. The growth of the Ashkenazi population and the spread of their congregations may seem in marked contrast to this development, and by comparison far more impressive, but in fact both communities found themselves to some extent in the same predicament: the employment structure and the economic basis of Dutch Jewry in general were cripplingly restricted, Jews continued to be barred from most trades and retail businesses, and overseas commerce and shipping were in steady decline.

It was largely for the same reasons, therefore, that many needy Ashkenazim in the Republic, like many Sephardim, displayed great readiness to emigrate in the decades around 1750, mostly to England, North America, or Surinam. Compared with the gloomy prospects facing most Jews in central and eastern Europe at the time, the Dutch Republic may have continued to seem a land full of promise, but compared with Great Britain and the American continent, by about 1750 that promise had come to seem particularly modest.

⁷⁷ Vries, *From Pedlars to Textile Barons*, 28–35; F. Egmond, 'Contours of Identity: Poor Ashkenazim in the Dutch Republic', in *DJH* iii. 205–25.

⁷⁸ Leiden Municipal Archives, city archives 2, 114, court calendar 3W, fos. 75 6, ruling of 24 June 1733.

THE JEWS IN THE REPUBLIC UNTIL ABOUT 1750

Religious, Cultural, and Social Life

YOSEF KAPLAN

Two Ethnic Groups and Two Deterritorialized Cultures

The religious wars that engulfed Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and processes of confessionalization created a mass phenomenon of religious refugees: hundreds of thousands of Christians, Muslims, and Jews were forced to leave their homes and seek shelter elsewhere. This disruptive population movement shaped the early modern world and had a deep influence on the society, economy, and culture of the European states that absorbed these masses of immigrants. Political and economic factors lay behind many of the expulsions and persecutions of minorities; however, religion was the reason most frequently cited to justify them. This demographic disruption, which changed the world, also changed the map of Jewish settlements, as Jewish communities that had existed for many generations, such as those in the Iberian peninsula, ceased to exist, and new communities arose elsewhere in their stead.

The Dutch Republic became a magnet for refugees of various origins thanks to the freedom of conscience that prevailed there and because of its flourishing economy. The Jewish immigrants in Holland shared their fate and experience as refugees with members of other confessional groups such as German Protestants, French Huguenots, English Quakers, and others. However, from the beginning of the sixteenth century, the centre of gravity of Jewish religious and cultural creativity moved eastward, to the Ottoman empire and to Poland and Lithuania. Furthermore, in comparison to the large number of Jews in those major centres, the size of the new Jewish community in the Dutch Republic was rather modest. Nevertheless, this Jewish community made an impression in the Jewish world far greater than its demographic weight. By virtue of the extraordinary wealth of the Spanish and Portuguese Jews and the cultural uniqueness of their community, and because of the flourishing publishing

¹ N. Terpstra, Religious Refugees in the Early Modern World: An Alternative History of the Reformation (Cambridge, 2015).

industry, developed by both Sephardi and Ashkenazi Jews in Amsterdam, the presence of Dutch Jewry in the history of the Jews in the early modern period was especially influential.

The Sephardi and Ashkenazi Jews who reached the safe haven of Holland belonged to separate ethnic diasporas, but the cultures of these two diasporas shared a common denominator: they were deterritorialized cultures, i.e. cultures that had lost a direct and binding link with a specific territory.² The particular cultures of the Sephardi and the Ashkenazi Jews who arrived in Amsterdam were cut off from any territorial connection, though the Land of Israel existed in their consciousness as an actual place, both in their faith and in their religious ceremonies. However, each of these two cultures was based on concepts and values that had developed in Europe and were meant to respond to the specific demands of a nation in diaspora; they had to be reprocessed and adapted anew to the needs of every new place where Jews settled. The Sephardi and Ashkenazi communities developed ethnic and cultural connections with their respective diasporas separately. Rabbis and preachers from the global Sephardi diaspora were invited and hired by the Sephardim in Holland. After the first third of the seventeenth century, when the Spanish Portuguese community in Amsterdam had become the metropolis of the western Sephardim, its supremacy was accepted by all the Sephardi communities of western Europe and the colonies in the Americas. To the same extent, the Ashkenazi community in Amsterdam regarded the Ashkenazi Torah centres in central Europe and Poland as the source of religious authority and their natural reservoir of rabbis. Moreover, they viewed the communities of the Ashkenazi diaspora as the natural market for their publishing industry in Hebrew and Yiddish. Despite the deep cultural and social differences between the Sephardim and the Ashkenazim in Holland, however, they shared a consciousness of belonging to universal Judaism. This consciousness was expressed in times of crisis and persecution, when the Jews of Amsterdam provided material assistance and sometimes diplomatic support for Jews in danger and distress in various places.

Two central funds that operated among the Sephardim of Amsterdam from the early days transformed the Talmud Torah congregation into an international body providing aid to Jews and Jewish communities in distress: Cativos, the fund for the redemption of captives, and the Terra Santa (Holy Land) fund, for poor Jews, mainly Sephardim, settled in Palestine. From the start of the Chmielnicki massacres in Poland (1648–9) until the beginning of the 1670s, the community took part in the pan-Jewish effort to redeem prisoners who had fallen into the hands of the Tatars, and, after 1654, also into the hands of the Muscovites. For its part, for decades the Terra Santa fund made individual grants to members of the Sephardi community in Jerusalem, and

² N. Papastergiadis, *The Turbulence of Migration: Globalization, Deterritorialization and Hybridity* (Oxford, 2000), 100–21; J. E. Braziel and A. Mannur, 'Nation, Migration, Globalization: Points of Contention in Diaspora Studies', in Braziel and Mannur (eds.), *Theorizing Diaspora* (Oxford, 2008), 1–22.

supplied more modest assistance to the Sephardi settlements in Safed, Hebron, and Tiberias.³

Both the Spanish Portuguese and the Ashkenazi Jews from central and eastern Europe who reached Amsterdam during the first third of the seventeenth century had to create the organizational infrastructure of their communities ex nihilo. The beginnings were modest enough and gave no hint of the flourishing Jewish life that was to develop in the city during the time of the Republic. It should be stressed, however, regarding the Spanish and Portuguese Jews who arrived in Amsterdam and other cities where communities of the western Sephardim were established, such as Livorno, Hamburg, London, Bayonne, and Bordeaux, that the Jewish cultural heritage that they brought with them from the Iberian peninsula was thin and spotty. This is because the first Jews to arrive in these places were New Christians, who belonged to the fourth or fifth generation after the mass conversions that put an end to the Jewish presence in Iberia. The crypto-Jewish practices they had observed in Spain and Portugal were not connected to the Jewish tradition and had undergone a process of hybridization as a result of the cultural influence of Catholicism and the need to keep their Jewish identity a deep secret. Consequently, a chasm yawned between the culture with which they arrived at their destinations in western Europe and the culture of Sephardi Jewish communities in the Ottoman empire and North Africa, which were established by those who chose not to convert but rather to remain in exile from the Iberian peninsula.

At the beginning of the seventeenth century it would have been hard to imagine that the Portuguese New Christians settling in the city would manage to develop any Jewish life worthy of the name. With the exception of a few who had already experienced some form of Jewish life before turning up in Amsterdam, most of the Iberian Jewish immigrants arriving at that time fell into the category of 'New Jews'—both because institutional Judaism was a complete novelty to them and also because the Jewish life they were about to create exhibited new characteristics, which may be considered as harbingers of modern European Judaism. Most of the New Christians then arriving in Amsterdam had never before come across a true Jewish community, and the first one they encountered was that which they themselves created. This process was repeated from the end of the sixteenth century onwards wherever Sephardi communities were established in western Europe, since they were built by New Christians who had just returned openly to Judaism. Amsterdam, however, this phenomenon

³ I. S. Emmanuel, 'The Assistance of the Sephardi Communities of Amsterdam and Curação to the Holy Land and Safed' (Heb.), *Sefunot*, 6 (1962), 399–424; Y. Kaplan, 'The Portuguese Community and the Ashkenazi World', *DJH* ii. 23–45: 40–1; T. Levie Bernfeld, *Poverty and Welfare among the Portuguese Jews in Early Modern Amsterdam* (Oxford, 2012), 85, 96, 137, 163, 150, 180, 182, 389 n. 28.

⁴ Y. Kaplan, 'Between Christianity and Judaism in Early Modern Europe: The Confessionalization Process of the Western Sephardi Diaspora', in L. Gall and D. Willoweit (eds.), *Judaism, Christianity, and Islam in the Course of History: Exchange and Conflicts* (Munich, 2011), 307–41.

was unique because of the particularly impressive achievements of these Conversos, in respect of both community organization and cultural creativity.

In contrast to the impressive economic and cultural presence of the first Portuguese merchants to gain a foothold in Amsterdam, the grinding poverty of the few Ashkenazi immigrants who arrived in the city during the first decades of the seventeenth century was strikingly obvious; most were pedlars, who lived on the margins of the Sephardi community and were employed by it as meat vendors and slaughterers. Most had come from the fringes of German Jewish society, which had still not recovered from the social and cultural stagnation in which it had lingered since the end of the fourteenth century, and there were no prominent rabbinic scholars among them. By contrast, there was no shortage of Jewish vagabonds and beggars, who were known in Germany as Betteljuden.⁵ Until the mid-1630s the few dozen German (and a handful of Polish) Jews who had settled in the city did not attempt to establish their own congregation. They prayed in the Sephardi synagogues and buried their dead in the Sephardi Beth Haim in Ouderkerk (PLATE 9). Because they did not belong to the nação (the ethnic group descended from Jews who became Catholic in the mass conversions of Spain and Portugal), these Jews were not treated as members of the Sephardi community. But after the number of Ashkenazim had increased, and included a few petit bourgeois householders, a separate prayer quorum was organized for them during the High Holy Days of 1635. Their dependence upon the Sephardim was still great, but in 1639 they became a fully independent community, legally as well as organizationally. Three years later they rented a large building from the Sephardim for use as a synagogue, and during that same year they bought a site in Muiderberg for their own cemetery.6 The Ashkenazi autonomous body was known to the authorities as De Hoogduytsche Joodse Natie (the High German Jewish Nation), and its parnasim (governors) were responsible to the burgomasters for the administration of their community just as the Sephardi parnasim were responsible for their community. They had absolute authority over all the Ashkenazi Jews in the city. Civil suits among the Ashkenazim were usually settled by mediation or by the judgement of a rabbinical court. The community regulations forbade departure from it in order to establish a new congregation, and the parnasim had the immutable right to impose fines and other punishments, including detention in the municipal jail.

⁵ A. M. Vaz Dias, 'Nieuwe bijdragen tot de geschiedenis der Amsterdamsche Hoogduitsch-Joodsche gemeente', *BMGJWN* 6 (1940), 153–60: Y. Kaplan, 'The Portuguese Community in Seventeenth-Century Amsterdam and the Ashkenazi World', *DJH* ii. 23–5.

⁶ Kaplan, 'The Portuguese Community in Seventeenth-Century Amsterdam', 28–35.

Jewish Autonomy under the Freedom of Conscience of the Dutch Republic

Jewish autonomy in the countries of Europe during the Middle Ages and the early modern period was based on recognition of the Jews as a corporation, and the juridical definition of every member of the Jewish community derived from membership in the corporation. Individual Jews had no legal status outside the Jewish corporation, a situation which gave the communities full power to impose control over their members. Excommunication was the ultimate punishment available to the community to discipline its members. An excommunicated person who wished to remain a Jew and thus enjoy the protection such corporate membership conferred was deterred from converting to the religion of the local majority and had no alternative but to beg forgiveness and accept all the demands and conditions of the community leadership for the excommunication to be rescinded. Among the Jews of Amsterdam as well, and especially in the Sephardi community, the threat of excommunication was a deterrent, a means of social control, and a force to impose discipline. Throughout the seventeenth century the parnasim of the Sephardi community in Amsterdam imposed the punishment of excommunication on members of the community about forty times, proportionately a rather large number, especially in comparison to other Jewish communities at that time, and even in comparison to the other religious churches and denominations in the Dutch Republic. For example, the Calvinist church of Amsterdam imposed only thirty-three excommunications between 1578 and 1700 among 5,754 instances of discipline adjudicated in it. The use of excommunication in the Sephardi community was intended to mark the boundaries of collective religious identity and communal discipline, because most of its members were not used to living under the strictures of Jewish law in the framework of a Jewish community. The experience of Jewish life in a communal framework was alien to them. To ensure that this community would fit into the Jewish world, the Sephardi leadership had to insist that the norms of Jewish law be observed and honoured unequivocally. Naturally, the more the community insisted on forming its Jewish character, the more it gave rise to deviants within it, and by means of the struggle against them, it sharpened the lines of its particularity as a community of New Jews.

In the situation that arose in the Dutch Republic during the seventeenth century, however, a change began to take place in the definition of the status of individuals in the community and the society. The authorities in Amsterdam did give the Sephardi community (and later the Ashkenazi community as well) the right to impose control over its members, and to this end to levy fines and even to excommunicate. Given the

⁷ D. M. Swetschinski, Reluctant Cosmopolitans: The Portuguese Jews of Seventeenth-Amsterdam (London, 2000), v. index: herem; Y. Kaplan, An Alternative Path to Modernity (Leiden, 2000), 108–42; H. Roodenburg, Onder Censuur (Hilversum, 1990), 137, 148, and see 146–204.

political and religious situation in the Dutch Republic, the use of excommunication became problematic and began to lose its power over the years. The principle of freedom of conscience, which the Republic adopted as early as 1579, made it impossible to force someone join the Calvinist church if he or she did not wish to do so. Although the preciezen ('precisionists': strictly orthodox) had the upper hand in the Calvinist church, those who were unwilling to submit to its discipline could remain outside the church. In general it may be said that in most of the cities of the Republic, not more than 20 per cent of the Dutch population were members of the public church. Among those who did not join were quite a few who went to church on Sundays and holidays; however, this did not make them subject to Christelicker strafe, i.e. church discipline. These unaffiliated church-goers were known as liefhebbers (sympathizers), and along with them there were many Catholics, who were not permitted to hold public services in many cities, as well as Mennonites, Lutherans, and members of various Christian sects, refugees from various countries. Among the residents of the Republic there were also libertines, Deists, and even atheists, but mainly many people who were indifferent to any religious faith. Within the Jewish communities of Amsterdam the situation was different. In principle these communities too did not have the authority to force Jewish residents of Amsterdam to join them. Iberian New Christian immigrants who did not wish to become Jews could of course refrain from doing so, and their presence on the margins of the Sephardi community created quite a bit of tension. However, in contrast to the low proportion of Dutch Christians who joined the Calvinist church, most of the Jewish immigrants, both Sephardi and Ashkenazi, did join the Jewish communities. This was primarily because the communities offered them protection and provided for their religious needs. However, even those whose connection with the Jewish religion was weak (especially among the Spanish and Portuguese) were interested in belonging to a supportive framework that provided for their social and cultural needs. The poor needed the economic assistance of the communal charity funds, without which they could not survive, and to a large extent the wealthy Sephardi merchants used their control of the community to regulate their economic connections and partnerships with other members of the community. Nevertheless, since any individual Jew in the Dutch Republic could leave his or her community and live outside it, without being required to join the public church, theoretically those who were excommunicated who could do without the economic support of the community could leave its ranks without being forced to convert.8

In the seventeenth century the threat of excommunication was wielded frequently in the Sephardi community of Amsterdam, and it was customarily applied even for transgressions that were punished less severely in most other Jewish communities. Between 1623 and the end of the eighteenth century at least sixty-six people were

⁸ Y. Kaplan, *Religion, Politics and Freedom of Conscience: Excommunication in Early Modern Jewish Amsterdam*, Menasseh ben Israel Instituut, Studies, 5 (Amsterdam, 2010).

excommunicated. Not a few of these were punished for offences against morality, especially in marital relations. The heads of the community were extremely vigilant in this area, both to maintain the integrity of the well-connected elite (by preventing clandestine and fraudulent marriages) and to preserve the 'good name' of the Amsterdam Sephardi community throughout the entire Sephardi diaspora. According to the regulations of the Sephardi community, only the Mahamad (the ruling council) had the right to excommunicate. In every instance, however, the parnasim consulted with the rabbis regarding halakhic considerations in each excommunication, but the prerogative was theirs alone. Most of the excommunicated members were punished for transgressions that involved challenges to the power of the parnasim, or attacks on their honour and that of the rabbis. The right of excommunication gave great powers to the elite of well-established families and strengthened their social control. At the same time, it was also used occasionally to discipline members of the elite who had rebelled against the general rules: witness the excommunication of the Del Sotto family in 1670 for rejecting the authority of the Mahamad and withdrawing from the congregation for a time. 9 A series of excommunications took place in the early 1680s involving several of the wealthy merchants in the congregation. These excommunications led to attempts to undermine the Sephardi autonomy, since some of the excommunicated merchants appealed against their punishment to the civil courts of Amsterdam and even to the higher authorities in The Hague. Not only was the Mahamad compelled to appear before a gentile court, a procedure which it had itself instigated in other instances, but it was also forced to compromise and set conditions for the return of the rebels to the bosom of the community. After that it did not take long for the burgomasters of Amsterdam to decide, on January 1683, to stop the parnasim from using the punishment of excommunication against members of the community without previously receiving authorization from the burgomasters themselves. Although this decision was revoked on 14 May of the same year, the municipal authorities also recommended at that time that the parnasim should not make excessive use of the punishment of excommunication.¹⁰

Only rarely was the excommunication made permanent (Baruch Spinoza and Juan de Prado are the most famous examples). Most of the other excommunications were rescinded within a reasonably short time, after the transgressors had announced their willingness to repent. When the penalty lost its sacral significance in the view of many members of the Sephardi community, it became difficult to convince them that the same strictures applied to those who were in contact with excommunicates as to the excommunicates themselves. Therefore the *parnasim* increasingly preferred expulsion from the community to excommunication. The punishment of expulsion

⁹ Swetschinski, Reluctant Cosmopolitans, 252–9.

¹⁰ Kaplan, Religion, Politics and Freedom of Conscience, 21–7.

¹¹ Kaplan, An Alternative Path to Modernity, 128-39.

had, in fact, social consequences similar to the punishment of excommunication, but without the sacral consequences. Among other things, it did not prevent social contact between members of the community and those expelled from it. Similarly, in many cases the individual who was about to incur the penalty of excommunication could redeem himself by paying a monetary fine. This procedure was called *resgate do herem* (ransom from excommunication).¹²

The Sephardi leadership of Amsterdam waged a constant struggle against those who had either not yet given up the idea of returning to Iberia or who wanted to live a double life as Jews and Christians. There were several reasons for this: because they wanted to protect their economic interests, because of family connections with Iberia, or because of religious doubt. As early as 1620 the Beth Israel congregation passed a regulation forbidding any man who was not circumcised to enter the synagogue. In 1644 the Mahamad of the Talmud Torah community declared that those who travelled to the 'lands of idolatry' would be punished for doing so upon their return. The transgressors were required to ask forgiveness from the pulpit of the synagogue, and for four years they were denied the honour of being called up to read from the Torah. Moreover, they were not allowed to serve in any communal office. Between 1644 and 1747 eighty-five members of the Sephardi community of Amsterdam were required to ask for forgiveness and to undergo the humiliating ceremony in public for travelling to places where they were forced to deny their Judaism. ¹³

While membership in the Mahamad conferred power and honour, it also entailed great responsibility, mainly financial, which many men sought to avoid in various ways, including refusal to serve after being chosen. The fine imposed on those who demurred reached 400 guilders during the seventeenth century, and the sum was doubled during the eighteenth century. Nevertheless, and despite the repeatedly instituted regulations against refusal, quite a few Jews preferred to pay the fines rather than undertake the responsibility. The problem became more acute during the eighteenth century, when the connections of a large section of the Sephardi economic elite with the Talmud Torah community weakened.¹⁴

¹² Kaplan, Religion and Freedom of Conscience, 27–9.

¹³ Y. Kaplan, 'The Travels of Portuguese Jews from Amsterdam to the "Lands of Idolatry" (1644–1724)', in id. (ed.), *Jews and Conversos* (Jerusalem, 1985), 187–224; id., 'Eighteenth-Century Rulings by the Rabbinical Court of Amsterdam's Community and their Socio-Historical Significance' (Heb.), in J. Michman (ed.), *Studies in the History of Dutch Jewry*, vol. v (Jerusalem, 1988), 28–30.

¹⁴ R. G. Fuks-Mansfeld, *De Sefardim van Amsterdam tot 1795: Aspecten van een Joodse minderheid in een Hollandse stad* (Hilversum, 1989), 149; Kaplan, 'Deviance and Excommunication in the Eighteenth Century: A Chapter in the Social History of the Sephardi Community of Amsterdam', *DJH* iii. 103–15: 107; Swetschinski, *Reluctant Cosmopolitans*, 192–4.

New Synagogues

In 1649 the Ashkenazim inaugurated their new synagogue in Houtgracht, signalling a further step towards independence (PLATE 16). 15 Although the Sephardi community's attitude towards its Ashkenazi counterpart remained paternalistic throughout the existence of the Republic, and Ashkenazim generally accepted this paternalism as a fact of life, relations between the two communities were not smooth. The Sephardim commonly regarded the Ashkenazim (tudescos) as paupers and as culturally inferior. One of the first regulations passed by the Talmud Torah community immediately after its establishment in 1639 was directed against those Ashkenazim who begged for charity opposite the synagogue gate on Fridays and Saturdays: it was said that many of them had vices opposed to morality and to the ways of good Judaism (bom Judesmo). The members of the Mahamad ordered the congregants not to give them any more alms outside the synagogue and prohibited members of the community from seeking the release of Ashkenazi vagrants who had been imprisoned in the Rasphuis, a situation that arose rather frequently. To cope with the problems of poverty and vagrancy among the Ashkenazim, the Sephardim established the Avodat Hesed (Work of Grace) society in 1642. Its aim was to help the Ashkenazi poor to learn a trade and, while learning, to work within the institution and to support themselves honourably. The supervisors of this society had to make certain that the Ashkenazi poor prayed in a quorum, 'with clean hands', and said grace at meals; furthermore, they had to encourage them as much as possible to engage in virtuous behaviour. 16

In the 1650s many scores of Jews from eastern Europe, especially Lithuania, began to flood into Amsterdam, fleeing the catastrophes brought upon them by the war between Poland and the Muscovites, and especially following the Swedish invasion. The Sephardim called these refugees 'polacos', though most of them were Lithuanian and prayed according to the Lithuanian rite. The older group of Ashkenazi Jews, most of whom had arrived from Germany, Moravia, and Silesia in the 1630s, was better established economically. The Sephardim tended to prefer the Poles to the Germans, and in the controversies that broke out between these two communities in the 1660s and the 1670s the Sephardim supported the Poles. The latter appeared to the Sephardim to be well versed in the Torah, unlike the Germans, who were regarded as ignoramuses. Sephardi preferential aid for needy Poles, however, was mainly designed to neutralize the growing power of the Ashkenazi congregation.¹⁷

The Sephardim tried hard to prevent intermarriage with Jews of other communities, and especially with Ashkenazim. In 1671 it was decided that Ashkenazi Jews

¹⁵ D. M. Sluys, 'Hoogduits-Joods Amsterdam van 1635 tot 1795', in H. Brugmans and A. Frank (eds.), *Geschiedenis der Joden in Nederland*, vol. i (Amsterdam, 1940), 308–22; L. Fuks, 'De Amsterdamse opperrabijn David Lida en de Vierlandensynode (1680–1684)', *StR* 6 (1972), 166–79.

¹⁶ Levie Bernfeld, Poverty and Welfare, 118–20.

¹⁷ Kaplan, An Alternative Path to Modernity, 78–107

who married Spanish or Portuguese women could not be considered members of the Sephardi community. In 1697 this regulation was extended to state explicitly that any Sephardi man who married a woman of another Jewish ethnic group would also be expelled from the community. In the early eighteenth century the procedures for accepting new members in the community were made stricter, and anyone who wished to join had to prove beyond any doubt that his origins were Spanish or Portuguese. ¹⁸

The Polish Jews at first joined the German congregation, but continued to try and maintain their independence, and the Germans did not prevent them from holding separate prayers according to the Lithuanian rite. By about 1660 the Poles already had their own synagogue and a separate cemetery. The Germans reacted sharply to the withdrawal of the Poles, and passed a regulation against those Germans who joined them. The Council of Four Lands in Poland, regarded as a supreme authority by Polish Jews, intervened in 1665 to protect the continued existence of the Polish congregation, and sought to appoint Sephardi *parnasim* and rabbis as go-betweens in the controversy. The Germans, aware of Sephardi support for the Poles, demurred, and this aroused the anger of the Sephardim, who felt insulted. The struggle between the Poles and the Germans came to an end in 1673, when the Amsterdam authorities banned the former from continuing to meet separately. The Polish Jews had no choice but to join the German congregation, which then became the sole representative of Germans and Poles combined.¹⁹

Several years earlier the Germans had decided to establish a new synagogue, the Great Synagogue (Grosse Shul; PLATE 19), which was dedicated in 1671. The erection of this large and spacious building at a time when tensions between the Germans and the Sephardim had reached their height seems to have driven the Sephardi congregation to build its own great sanctuary, the famous Esnoga, opposite the German synagogue. It was consecrated with great pomp and ceremony in 1675. The establishment of these two synagogues, one after the other, symbolized more than anything else how deeply rooted these two communities, the Sephardi and the Ashkenazi, were in Amsterdam soil, and how they had become an integral, recognized, and legitimate part of the social and religious landscape of that city. The synagogues, especially the Sephardi building, became tourist attractions, their splendid appearance arousing the curiosity of Christian visitors, including kings and counts, and firing the imagination of Dutch painters.²⁰

In 1677 the growth of the German community, especially after its absorption of the Poles, encouraged it to make plans for opening another synagogue, above the

¹⁸ Kaplan, 'The Portuguese Community and the Ashkenazi World', 41–5; id., *An Alternative Path to Modernity*, 72–7.

D. M. Sluys, 'Bijdrage tot de geschiedenis van de Poolsch-Joodsche gemeente te Amsterdam', BMGJWN
 (1925), 137–58; Y. D. Markon, 'The By-Laws of the Polish Jewish Community of Amsterdam of 1672', in Tsiyunim: Collected Articles in Memory of Y. N. Simchoni [Tsiyunim: kovets lezikhro shel y. n. simchoni] (Berlin, 1929), 161–7.

slaughterhouse behind the Great Synagogue. This synagogue, which was built in 1685, was called the Second or Upper Synagogue (Obbene Shul). A smaller synagogue, which was later to be called the Third Synagogue (Dritte Shul), was built in 1700, and the New Synagogue (Naye Shul) was dedicated in 1730.²¹

At the time of the consecration of the two great synagogues, relations between the two communities were strained, a state of affairs reflected in the 'struggle over the meat', when Sephardim and Ashkenazim were strictly forbidden to buy meat from the slaughterhouse of the rival community.²² However, relations soon became more peaceful again, and time after time Sephardim were called upon to help Ashkenazim settle their internal affairs. This was especially evident in the choice of parnasim, a subject which troubled Ashkenazim for many years. With the creation of a stratum of affluent burghers within the Ashkenazi community, oligarchical tendencies grew stronger. The burgher class sought to imitate the methods of their Sephardi counterparts, but without success. Until 1648 the Ashkenazi parnasim were chosen by all the members of the community, but after that control passed into the hands of a restricted group of wealthy veteran members, who alone had the right to elect and be elected. As early as 1656 it was decided that seven men chosen for the purpose would draw up a list of at least eighteen candidates by the New Year. Every six months, starting from Sukkot in 1656, several parnasim would be picked from that list by lot, cast by a child between 5 and 7 years old. Those among the eighteen candidates who were not chosen as parnasim would, however, be given the right to attend the meetings of the parnasim when the time came to discuss the appointment or dismissal of the rabbi, the cantor, or the treasurer. Twenty 'God-fearing' members of the community also participated in this meeting, and its decisions were passed by a majority of two-thirds of the vote.

After a series of internal quarrels and disputes within the Ashkenazi community during the first decade of the eighteenth century, the board of *parnasim* decided in 1711 to address the Mahamad of the Sephardi community, asking its members to draft new by-laws for them. These by-laws contained 113 articles and were written in Dutch. They were translated into Yiddish with slight changes, and the translated version, which contained only 112 articles, was printed. This was the first time the by-laws of the Ashkenazi community were printed, and the Sephardi influence on them is notable. The composition of the board of *parnasim* reflected that of the Mahamad of the Sephardi community. Similarly, a special pew was set aside for the Ashkenazi *parnasim*, in imitation of the Sephardi synagogue. The Sephardi terms *heikhal* (sanctuary) and *teivah* (pulpit) were used instead of the Ashkenazi terms *aron kodesh* (Holy Ark) and *bimah* (platform). The Ashkenazi community was then given the same name as the Sephardi community, Talmud Torah, and the name of the institution for religious

²¹ J. F. van Agt, *Synagogen te Amsterdam* (The Hague, 1974), 24–65; L. Fuks and R. G. Fuks-Mansfeld, 'The Inauguration of the Portuguese Synagogue of Amsterdam, Netherlands, in 1675', *Arquivos do Centro Cultural Português*, 14 (1979), 489–507.

education founded in 1660 changed to Ets Haim.²³ Thus the Sephardi custodial relationship with the Ashkenazi congregation reached a new peak. These by-laws also established a new and complex method for choosing the parnasim: the serving parnasim and two treasurers would choose those worthy of serving on the board of electors from the list of wealthy members. Of these, twenty-five would be chosen by lot, and there was to be no family relationship between them closer than those covered by the incest prohibitions; these twenty-five names would be placed in a box from which the seven electors would be chosen, and they in turn would choose the parnasim by dropping sealed voting slips into a locked box. The first clause of the by-laws laid down the retraction of the decrees of excommunication issued against members of the community for one reason or another. Although the process of excommunication in this community has not been sufficiently examined, it would seem that the Ashkenazim were also quick to impose this penalty; they often used the 'great excommunication' even against financial delinquents, in a very impressive ceremony before the open Torah ark, with lighted black candles and the sounding of the *shofar* (ram's horn). There were also cases in which Christian citizens forced the community leadership to impose the 'great excommunication' upon Jewish debtors who would not pay their debts. The wording of the regulations of 1711 was largely compressed, and its definitions were not always clear, and this often aroused controversy among the wealthy members of the community, the ruling group. After the municipal authorities examined the matter and perused the opinions drafted by the parnasim of the Sephardi community on this matter, they ordered the revision or replacement of the community regulations. In 1735 new by-laws were drafted, which were adopted two years later. Not many changes were introduced, but it was laid down that there would be six parnasim and a single treasurer—exactly like the Sephardim. The new regulations reflect the expansion of the community, which had become large and independent. Until the 1750s no further organizational changes were made. 24 These regulations served the community until 1808, when the status and form of the Jewish communities in Holland underwent fundamental change.²⁵

The Jews in the *Mediene*: Sephardim and Ashkenazim outside Amsterdam

Although during the years of the Republic a good number of Jewish settlements were established in its provinces, a true community organization was confined to just a few places. The Jews in general were not attracted to settlements outside the province of

²³ E. Tal (ed.), *The Ashkenazi Community of Amsterdam in the Eighteenth Century* [Hakehilah ha'ashkenazit be'amsterdam bame'ah hashemoneh-esreh] (Jerusalem, 2010), 20.

Sluys, 'Hoogduits-Joods Amsterdam', 318–29, 344–8, 300–2; Tal, The Ashkenazi Community of Amsterdam,
 Tal (ed.), The Ashkenazi Community of Amsterdam, 19–21, 30–75.

Holland. Moreover, in many of the towns of the Republic, efforts at Jewish settlement encountered opposition from the local population, both for religious reasons and also for social reasons. In general the Sephardim preceded the Ashkenazim not only in Amsterdam but also in settling in other cities in the Dutch Republic. However, during the eighteenth century the number of Ashkenazim increased throughout the country, mainly as a result of immigration from Germany. The Ashkenazim called the Jewish settlement outside Amsterdam mediene ('country' in Ashkenazi Hebrew or Yiddish pronunciation), while Amsterdam was called mokum (place). There were cities and districts in the mediene that did not accept Jews at all, and some villages were willing to accept only a small number of them. Various reasons were offered at that time for rejecting the Jews. In 1713, for example, Jews were forbidden to enter the province of Utrecht because of the outbreak of infectious disease abroad. The attitude towards the Jews who wished to enter settlements in the Dutch Republic was similar to the attitude towards groups of vagrants of many kinds, including criminal bands. However, despite the severe measures taken to prevent their entry, it was impossible to keep out foreigners because of the long stretches of unprotected border between Germany and the Austrian Southern Netherlands. The provincial authorities did not have effective means to police the borders of the countryside.

In the isolated Sephardi congregations outside Amsterdam, the clear influence of the metropolitan community made itself felt; in many cases it served as the 'mother congregation'. The Sephardi congregations of Kampen, Amersfort, and Nijkerk, which were the only inland Sephardi congregations in the Republic, were also the only ones independent of Amsterdam. In the first two towns, the results were disappointing. The community of Kampen, which began to develop during the 1670s, disappeared again within a few years; the effort to found a Sephardi congregation in Amersfoort, which began at about the same time, lasted only a little longer, coming to an end in 1729 when Dr Moses de Fortis tried to hold prayers in the 'Sephardi rite' in his home and had to hire eight Ashkenazim to complete the prayer quorum of ten. The congregation in Nijkerk was established by Jews who are called 'Portuguese' in the documents, but belonged mainly to the Italiander family from Venice; most of the members of the community were Italians and Ashkenazim. Starting in 1728 they prayed according to the Sephardi rite in the home of one of the founders, but the Ashkenazim withdrew in 1761 and established a separate congregation, and the original one disintegrated.²⁶

Communities of a different kind were established in Maarsen and Naarden, where Jewish life began to develop when several wealthy Sephardim from Amsterdam established splendid summer homes there. In time these became permanent residences. The synagogue in Maarsen was built in 1720 and called Neveh Shalom, but within thirty

²⁶ J. Zwarts, 'De Joodse gemeenten buiten Amsterdam', in H. Brugmans and A. Frank (eds.), *Geschiedenis der Joden in Nederland*, vol. i (Amsterdam, 1940), 382–453: 398, 401; D. E. Cohen, 'De zoogenaamde Portugeesche gemeente te Nijkerk', *BMGJWN* 3 (1925), 20–7.

years the local community had died out. In Naarden the Magen David synagogue was dedicated in 1727, and the local congregation was run for many years by *parnasim* from the Da Silva Solis family, who were at times the only leaders.²⁷

The most serious efforts to maintain Sephardi community life outside Amsterdam were made in The Hague, Rotterdam, and Middelburg, but only in The Hague did they last. In Middelburg, where the Sephardi presence expanded with the arrival of refugees from Brazil after the fall of Pernambuco to the Portuguese in 1654, the community ceased to exist in 1725. At that point the Ashkenazim living in the city adopted their first regulations, and the few remaining Sephardim joined the Ashkenazi community. The total number of Jews there did not exceed one hundred individuals. Until 1739 two parnasim headed the community, and after that date a third one was added. Election of the parnasim was closely supervised by the mayors of the city, who sometimes intervened and altered the results. One undated set of community by-laws, written in Dutch, states explicitly that the local authorities were entitled to appoint new parnasim from among the candidates nominated by the departing parnasim. Such blatant intervention in the internal affairs of a Jewish community was unknown elsewhere in the Dutch Republic, and the reason for it was apparently the desire to prevent the internal conflicts that were characteristic of this community.²⁸ In Rotterdam the community grew rapidly after the arrival of the De Pinto brothers in 1647, but it came to an end in 1736.²⁹ Although Sephardim lived in The Hague throughout the seventeenth century, it was only towards the end of that century that true community life was consolidated there. The importance of the city as a centre of government attracted many Sephardi Jews, including several members of the social elite, who performed diplomatic functions in the service of the Republic and other countries. Ashkenazim and Sephardim cooperated in the early organization of this community, and between 1670 and 1694 prayers were also held in common, though later their ways parted. In 1692 the Sephardim established the Beth Jacob congregation, and six years later a second congregation was founded, later named Honen Dalim (Succour the Needy). In 1726 this congregation built an elegant synagogue. It was probably planned by the French court architect Daniel Marot in the Louis XIV style, but was also influenced by the model of the Esnoga of Amsterdam. Relations between the two congregations were strained for years, Honen Dalim enjoying the support of the Amsterdam community. Only in 1743 did the two congregations combine and Beth Jacob cease to exist.³⁰ The organizational features of these few Sephardi communities were influenced by those

²⁷ J. Zwarts, 'De officieele organisatie der Portugeesche Synagoge van Maarssen in 1764', *Jaarboekje Niftarlake* (1933), 16–31; H. Henrichs, *De Synagoge van Naarden* 1730–1935 (Amstelveen, 1982), 21–35.

²⁸ S. Litt, Pinkas, Kahal, and the Mediene: The Records of Dutch Ashkenazi Communities in the Eighteenth Century as Historical Sources (Leiden, 2008), 13–14, 36–7, 43–6.

²⁹ Zwarts, 'De Joodse gemeenten buiten Amsterdam', 389–95.

³⁰ Ibid. 399–400, 416–17; M. Henriquez Pimentel, Geschiedkundige aantekeningen betreffende de Portugeesche Israëlieten in Den Haag en hunne Synagogen aldaar (The Hague, 1876).

developed in Amsterdam, which became a model imitated by most of the Sephardi communities in western Europe and the New World.

Increased immigration of Ashkenazim to The Hague led to the establishment of a separate congregation. There, too, the Sephardim served as their patrons, and their first regulations, of 1701, were drafted with the supervision of two Sephardi parnasim. However, in 1716 the Ashkenazim in The Hague drafted new regulations on their own, and later they inaugurated their first synagogue. Their membership list contains thirty-nine households, and it is estimated that there were between 170 and 200 souls. Between 1723 and 1785 a member of the Boas family—bankers who for many years were the wealthiest Ashkenazi family in the Dutch Republic—always served in the community leadership.31 The regulations of 1723 call the community's board of governors the regirung and not kahal, which is indicative of their self-image. The board included two parnasim and a gabai tsedakah (treasurer), as well as the ne'eman (trustee), who was responsible for maintaining the community register. His official function was merely advisory, and he did not have the right to vote. However, the fact that this position was usually held by someone from the Boas family shows that it was important and influential. The parnasim were chosen for two years, and the ne'eman and the gabai served one-year terms. For the most important decisions an assembly was called, with the participation of everyone who had served as a parnas in the past. In 1734 such an assembly decided that, because of lack of means, no rabbi would be chosen for the next decade.³² To be accepted as a member of the congregation, it was necessary to pay an 'advance' of 5 guilders and to sign the register to indicate acceptance of the community regulations.³³ Between 1724 and 1795 the register of the Ashkenazi congregation of The Hague contains the signatures of 570 householders, including sixty-nine men from elsewhere, usually other places in the Dutch Republic. Jews began to arrive in The Hague in significant numbers after 1737. Among the arrivals were quite a few Jews from Germany, Poland, and Bohemia, and a few from Moravia, France, and the Land of Israel.³⁴ Some Jews who lived in The Hague were not members of the community; they were called toshavim (residents, in Hebrew). Usually these were poor people. In 1744-5, following the empress Maria Theresa's decision to expel the Jews of Prague, Tobias Boas played an important role in convincing the government of the Dutch Republic to intervene in defence of the Jews.³⁵ As in Amsterdam, friction arose between Sephardim and Ashkenazim, especially on the subject of the sale of meat. This friction was also found in Middelburg in the early eighteenth century. In Rotterdam, by contrast, the Portuguese Jews remaining in the city after the dissolution of the congregation joined the Ashkenazi congregation, even transferring the remaining area of their cemetery.³⁶

Litt, Pinkas, Kahal, and the Mediene, 26–7.
 Ibid. 144.
 Ibid. 150–2.
 Zwarts, 'De Joodse gemeenten buiten Amsterdam', 394 ff.

As noted, Ashkenazi Jews were dispersed throughout almost all areas in the Republic, but in many cities their numbers were limited to a few households, and the organization of Jewish life was placed in the hands of isolated families. Unlike other countries in Europe, the Jews in the Dutch Republic were not required to pay lump sums, Schutzgeld, to the Republic or their cities of residence.³⁷ In contrast to the central role of Amsterdam in the community life of all Sephardim in the Republic, the Ashkenazim dispersed throughout the land were almost entirely organized into separate communities. In Drenthe, a clear and unequivocal rule applied for generations regarding Jewish settlement: in each village the right to settle was granted to only three Jewish families, including a butcher, a merchant, and a tanner.³⁸ Under such conditions, no Jewish life worthy of the name could develop. Similarly, in 's-Hertogenbosch in northern Brabant the city authorities frustrated Jewish life and rejected requests from a few local Jews to be allowed to hold public prayer meetings. In 1768 the Jews who took part in the annual city fair established a 'travellers' society' (ris-chewre), known as Sa'adat Zekenim (Aid to the Aged). This society possessed two mobile synagogues, which were taken from market to market.³⁹ However, Ashkenazi community life did develop in a number of cities, especially from the first half of the eighteenth century onwards. In Zwolle, for example, true community organization began in 1722, and in 1747 community by-laws were adopted. One clause stipulated that, in any matter requiring a decision, all the members of the congregation had to be assembled; this provoked much friction and caused the municipality to intervene several times in Jewish affairs. In 1747 the city council granted the Jewish community use of part of a former convent (Librije) as a synagogue free of charge. 40 In about 1720 an organized community also sprang up in Leiden (PLATE 18), and a community council was chosen that same year. The by-laws instituted in 1723 gave the parnasim extensive rights, including that of imposing fines on violators of law and order. 41 In Rotterdam, at a time when the Sephardi congregation was dying out, the Ashkenazi community, numbering several dozen members, flourished. Because of internal squabbles, in 1714 the city council intervened and ordered the drafting of by-laws for the 'Ashkenazi nation' in the city. These by-laws gave almost absolute power to the rabbi and the elders, and, aside from criminal matters, the community was granted complete autonomy. The first internal by-laws were drafted in 1725 and related to the organization of community institutions, the appointment of parnasim, the sale of meat, and like matters.⁴²

In Amersfoort, where Jews received particularly sympathetic treatment from the city council, a synagogue was opened in 1727; the community by-laws were ratified five

³⁷ Litt, Pinkas, Kahal, and the Mediene, 25.

³⁸ J. Michman, H. Beem, and D. Michman, *Pinkas: Geschiedenis van de joodse gemeenschap in Nederland* (Amsterdam, 1992), 295. ³⁹ Zwarts, 'De Joodse gemeenten buiten Amsterdam', 446. ⁴⁰ Ibid. 428–9.

⁴¹ D. S. van Zuiden, 'Iets uit de geschiedenis der Joden te Leiden', *Jaarboekje voor de geschiedenis en oudheid-kunde van Leiden en Rijnland*, 17 (1920), 79–96; Zwarts, 'De Joodse gemeenten buiten Amsterdam', 441–2.

⁴² Michman et al., *Pinkas*, 498–500.

years later.⁴³ In Groningen any assembly of Jews for the purpose of worship was forbidden in 1691, and admission of Jews to the city was severely curtailed. However, in 1744 the authorities ratified the by-laws of the congregation, and twelve years later the synagogue building, where prayers could be said publicly, was consecrated. The by-laws stated that the fines to be collected in the synagogue would be divided evenly between the poor of the Jewish community and the Christian poor of the city.⁴⁴

From 1670 the Jews of Leeuwarden owned a cemetery next to the city walls in Boterhoek, and from 1700 they were allowed to use half a building (near Amelandspijp) for prayers; the other half of the building was used by Catholics for their services. However, because of the policy of limiting the entry of Jews in the city, the growth of the community was halted; it was not until 1754 that the city council ratified the community by-laws, which stipulated that the Jewish community was to be governed by a committee of seven.⁴⁵

Confessionalization in the Amsterdam Sephardi Community

In the 1640s Amsterdam became the major city of the Sephardi communities in western Europe. Most of the Sephardim in these communities, former New Christians, adhered to the Jewish religion without undergoing an orderly process of socialization. The encounter with Jewish law aroused many difficulties for most of them. Rabbinical Judaism was different from what even those Conversos who secretly observed Jewish rituals and customs in Iberia could have known about the Jewish religion. It became clear to them very soon that there was a great difference between the way they had tried to observe the rituals and ceremonies as Conversos and observing them according to Jewish law. In the Sephardi community in Amsterdam various means were applied to accustom the new adherents to the Jewish way of life, and the process was not easy, since the parnasim themselves were also 'New Jews'. Despite these difficulties, the Sephardi community not only provided for the needs of its members but also became the main community of all the western Sephardi diaspora. 46 The Jewish printing houses of Amsterdam provided prayer-books in Spanish for congregations outside Holland as well, along with instruction books in Spanish and Portuguese for learning about the rituals and the practical foundations of Judaism. Within a short time Amsterdam became the chief supplier of translations into the Iberian languages of classic texts of the Jewish religious tradition, ethical and devotional literature, and the like.⁴⁷

 $^{^{\}rm 43}\,$ J. Zwarts, De Joodse gemeente van Amersfoort (Amersfoort, 1927).

⁴⁴ Michman et al., Pinkas, 395–6.

⁴⁵ Ibid. 442–4.

⁴⁶ E. Oliel-Grausz, 'Patrocinio and Authority: Assessing the Metropolitan Role of the Portuguese Nation of Amsterdam in the Eighteenth Century', in Y. Kaplan (ed.), The Dutch Intersection: The Jews and the Netherlands in Modern History (Leiden, 2008), 149–72.

⁴⁷ H. den Boer, 'Amsterdam as "Locus" of Iberian Printing in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries', in Kaplan (ed.), *The Dutch Intersection*, 87–110.

The Conversos from Iberia who reached Amsterdam and wished to become Jewish did not have to undergo conversion. They were defined as people who returned to the bosom of Israel, and their halakhic status was not that of proselytes. From traditions preserved by their families, some of them knew they were of priestly or Levite origin, and the rabbinical establishment recognized this. From a man 'who returned to the bosom of the Torah', only circumcision was required, and from the beginning of the 1620s uncircumcised men were not permitted to enter the synagogue. It is selfevident that they were prevented from receiving financial assistance if they needed it, and they could not be buried in the communal cemetery.⁴⁸ A few weeks after being circumcised and recovering from the operation, they would come to the synagogue for the first time, wrap themselves in a prayer shawl, and place tefillin (phylacteries) on their heads and arms for the first time in their lives. They recited prayers from a prayerbook in Spanish, as many members of this community continued to do all their lives because they never learned enough Hebrew. In the Sephardi synagogues in Amsterdam and in the Esnoga from 1675 onwards the cantor did pray in Hebrew, but those among the other worshippers who did not know Hebrew repeated the silent prayer in Spanish from their translated prayer-books.⁴⁹

While the community leadership could supervise the public behaviour of the 'New Jews', they had no way of supervising their way of life in their homes and even less so their fidelity to Jewish law when they were far from home, attending to their extensive commercial business.

The New Christian who returned to Judaism brought with him a rather well-formed habitus, which was expressed in forms of behaviour that were totally different from the normative behaviour of traditional Jewish communities at the time. Entry into the world of Jewish law and participation in Jewish ceremonies was intended to create a new habitus, which was meant to express the change that had taken place within the 'New Jew'. Very gradually, in Amsterdam and other centres of the Sephardi diaspora, an alternative religious and ritual system was consolidated, one strongly influenced by what was known to them in the Catholic countries from which they arrived and by the general culture of the states where they were newly arrived. However, particularly because the system was influenced by a variety of cultures, and of course drew upon Jewish sources as well, it took on a special form and content. This was a system permeated by ceremonies: ceremonies of circumcision for the new adherents to the community were accorded special pomp; the arrival of relatives from Iberia was celebrated in special fashion, with the veteran members of the family receiving honours and being called to the Torah in the synagogue; the Shavuot holiday,

⁴⁸ Kaplan, An Alternative Path to Modernity, 113; SAA, PIG 10, fo. 60.

⁴⁹ Y. Kaplan, 'Cristóbal Méndez, alias Abraham Franco de Silveyra: The Puzzling Saga of a Seventeenth-Century Converso', in M. Silvera (ed.), *Conversos, marrani e nuove comunità ebraiche in età moderna* (Florence, 2015), 19–47: 27–8.

commemorating the giving of the Torah, became a central event for the Torah study confraternities, and so on. Similarly, proclamations of excommunication in the synagogue were read with solemn ceremonies, with the doors of the Holy Ark open; requests for forgiveness by transgressors were recited in public from the pulpit of the synagogue; the ceremony for the removal of excommunication and the restoration of the excommunicated people to the bosom of the community was bound up with a series of severe public humiliations, and another considerable series of humiliations was imposed upon deviants and transgressors—all these were common and accepted events in the Amsterdam Sephardi community.⁵⁰ These were the most effective and practical means for implementing the Jewish confessionalization of the members of the *nação*, for setting the boundaries of the new identity, and for distinguishing between it and the common denominator of the entire *nação*, including both Jews and Conversos.

The ceremonies also reflected the hierarchical order that prevailed in the community, which the social elite took great care to preserve. The entire course of prayer in the synagogue was intended to bring this out: the *parnasim* in the Esnoga were seated on raised pews on the left side of the hall, from which they could observe everything that happened, and where they, too, could be seen, raised above the entire congregation. The presiding parnas, who was chosen from the Mahamad to serve for two months as the chairman, sat in a special seat on the *teivah*, the platform from which the Torah was read. The *ḥakham* (rabbi) of the community sat in a special central seat, at the foot of the platform, but all the worshippers could immediately discern that the seating of the members of the congregation was determined by the Mahamad, and of course it expressed the differences of status among the members of the community.

Towards the end of the seventeenth century, a pattern of western Sephardi ceremonies had been consolidated, based on Jewish customs that had become part of the religious ritual, with melodies and songs that were accepted in the Amsterdam community and transferred from it to the other parts of the diaspora. A new Sephardi habitus had taken shape, with clear identifying marks. The conduct of the Sephardim reflected gravidade, formality, a culture of courtesy worthy of a cultured nation, called gente politica and bom judesmo, worthy Judaism, and the proper conduct of synagogue services. All this was intended to present Judaism as civilized and cultured, with features befitting the patterns of behaviour that had crystallized within European courtly society and been transferred to the bourgeoisie. In the discourse of confessionalization a strong accent was placed on self-control, repression of instinct, restraining anger, and education for virtue, respect, and a culture of politeness. 51

⁵⁰ Kaplan, An Alternative Path to Modernity, 108–54.

⁵¹ Swetschinski, *Reluctant Cosmopolitans*, 207–10; Y. Kaplan, 'Gente Política: The Portuguese Jews of Amsterdam vis-à-vis Dutch Society', in C. Brasz and Y. Kaplan (eds.), *Dutch Jews as Perceived by Themselves and by Others* (Leiden, 2001), 21–40.

Confessionalization was founded upon the principle of the unity of the group and the peace prevailing among its members. As in the Calvinist church, for example, where care was taken to reconcile individuals embroiled in controversy before celebration of the Lord's Supper, which symbolized, among other things, the unity of the denomination as a community where the sacral spirit prevailed, so too in the Amsterdam Sephardi community care was taken to reconcile controversies among the members, so that these would not blemish the unity of the community or destroy its integrity. The discourse of the Sephardi community strongly condemned disputes (discordias), disagreements (diferencias), scandals (escándalos), divisions (desuniones), and commotions (tumultos). A large portion of the regulations that were formulated in the Sephardi community were intended to condemn any sort of behaviour that upset public order, not only within and around the synagogue, but everywhere.

Although the rabbis of the community were subject to the authority of the Mahamad, from whom they received their salaries, some of them exerted significant influence. Rabbi Saul Levi Mortera (1596–1660) was the most important halakhic authority in the first twenty years of the united Talmud Torah community. He received his talmudic education in Venice and arrived in Amsterdam in 1616. As early as 1619 he served as the <code>hakham</code> of the older congregation in the city, Beth Jacob. He was outstanding as a talented preacher, and after the establishment of the Talmud Torah community, he preached in the synagogue on three sabbaths every month. From 1639 until his death he was the senior rabbi of the community and taught Talmud to the highest class of the Ets Haim school. His sermons were given in Portuguese, but five volumes of manuscripts preserved in the rabbinical seminary of Budapest, containing 550 of his sermons, are written in Hebrew in his handwriting. His approach was rationalistic and his attitude towards New Christians who did not return to Judaism was strict and uncompromising. His approach was strict and uncompromising.

In the early 1630s the prestige of some of the younger rabbis, who had been raised and educated in Amsterdam, began to increase. Isaac Aboab da Fonseca (1605–93; PLATE 20) and Menasseh ben Israel (1604–57; PLATE 21) were the most prominent of these. Isaac Aboab was born in Castro Daire in northern Portugal and arrived in Amsterdam with his family at the age of 7. He was the best disciple of Rabbi Isaac Uziel (d. 1622), from Fez, Morocco, one of the first rabbis in Amsterdam. Aboab first served as the *ḥakham* of the Beth Israel congregation, and in 1639 he was appointed the fourth

⁵² H. P. Salomon, 'Saul Levi Mortera en zijn "Traktaat betreffende de Waarheid van de Wet van Mozes" (Ph.D. thesis, University of Nijmegen, 1988), pp. xxi–lv.

⁵³ M. Saperstein, Exile in Amsterdam: Saul Levi Morteira's Sermons to a Congregation of 'New Jews' (Cincinnati,

⁵⁴ A. Altmann, 'Eternality of Punishment: A Theological Controversy within the Amsterdam Rabbinate in the Thirties of the Seventeenth Century', *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research*, 40 (1972), I–88.

rabbi in the hierarchy of the united community.⁵⁵ He taught Talmud to the second highest class of Ets Haim. From 1642 to 1652 he was the rabbi of the Sephardi community of Recife, the Dutch colony of Pernambuco in north-east Brazil, until he was forced to return to Amsterdam when the region was reconquered by the Portuguese.⁵⁶ After Mortera's death Aboab was chosen to replace him as the chief rabbi of the community. He was a devoted kabbalist and a fervent follower of the mystic teachings of Rabbi Isaac Luria of Safed. In Nishmat hayim ('The Soul of Life'), a Hebrew work that he wrote in 1636, he argued fiercely against Mortera, who taught that there was no atonement for grave sins, and those who committed them were doomed to eternal punishment. Aboab instead taught that even the souls of the greatest sinners (such as Jews who converted to Catholicism) had hope for atonement in the world to come because of the purifying process of reincarnation.⁵⁷ He died at a ripe old age, and his influence was felt until the end. He was an outstanding preacher and had had a musical education: some of his compositions were included in the community liturgy. He translated two kabbalistic and Neoplatonic works by Abraham Cohen Herrera (d. 1635) from Spanish into Hebrew. Herrera, who lived in Amsterdam from 1620 onwards, never held a rabbinical position in the community. In his books Casa de la Divinidad ('House of the Divinity') and Puerta del Cielo ('Gate of Heaven') he sought to prove through a concordant approach, inherited from the masters of the Italian Renaissance, that Lurianic kabbalah was the pinnacle of wisdom and of universal theology.⁵⁸

Among European scholars of the seventeenth century, Menasseh ben Israel was the most famous rabbi of his time. Christian theologians found in him a challenging interlocutor, and he corresponded with, among others, Hugo Grotius, Caspar Barlaeus, Claude Saumaise, and Gerard Vossius. His influence on the Sephardi community, however, was rather limited. He too arrived in Holland with his family, Marranos from Portugal who settled in Amsterdam in 1613.⁵⁹ He belonged to the Neveh Shalom congregation, and from 1628 on he began to serve as a preacher there.

⁵⁵ D. Franco Mendes, *Memorias do estabelecimento e progresso dos Judeos Portuguezes e Espanhoes nesta famosa cidade de Amsterdam*, ed. L. Fuks and R. G. Fuks-Mansfeld (= *StR* 9/2) (Assen, 1975), 25–7; Altmann, 'Eternality of Punishment', 8–10; Swetschinski, *Reluctant Cosmopolitans*, 169, 204, 211, 244, 246, 250, 260; Y. Kaplan, 'El perfil cultural de tres rabinos sefardíes a través del análisis de sus bibliotecas', in J. Contreras, B. J. García García, and I. Pulido (eds.), *Familia, Religión y Negocio* (Madrid, 2002), 269–86: 271–76.

⁵⁶ R. Vainfas, Jerusalém Colonial: Judeus Portugueses no Brasil Holandês (Rio de Janeiro, 2010), 161–4, 203–7.

⁵⁷ Altmann, 'Eternality of Punishment', 9–40.

⁵⁸ N. Yosha, *Myth and Metaphor: Abraham Cohen Herrera's Philosophic Interpretation of the Lurianic Kabbalah* [Mitos umetaforah: haparshanut hafilosofit shel r. avraham kohen herrera lekabalat ha'ari] (Jerusalem, 1994), 21–84.

⁵⁹ H. P. Salomon, 'The Portuguese Background of Menasseh ben Israel's Parents as Revealed through the Inquisitorial Archives in Lisbon', *StR* 17 (1983), 105–46: Y. Kaplan, H. Méchoulan, and R. Popkin (eds.), *Menasseh ben Israel and his World* (Leiden, 1989); J. H. Coppenhagen, *Menasseh ben Israel: Manuel Dias Soeiro*, 1604–1657: A Bibliography (Jerusalem, 1990); A. K. Offenberg, *Menasseh ben Israel* (1604–1657): Een biografische schets (Amsterdam, 2000).

Three years later he was appointed as *ḥakham*. Along with his rabbinical education, he acquired a broad knowledge of philosophy and theology, and he was expert in the classical languages as well as in various European languages. In 1626 he established the first Jewish printing house in Amsterdam, which he ran until 1643, when his two sons assumed its management. After the establishment of the united community, he held the third place in the hierarchy of rabbis, and he was assigned to give a sermon in the synagogue on one sabbath every month. He was a prolific author, and his work was not entirely rabbinic in nature. He published some of his writings simultaneously in Spanish for the Sephardi Jews, and in Latin translation for the learned Christian community. His broad education and comprehensive reading are apparent in these works, as in others which he wrote during his efforts to effect the return of Jews to England (1650–5), and also in his substantial four-part book, *Conciliador* ('The Reconciler', 1632–51), in which he sought to resolve the apparent contradictions between various verses of the Bible.

The Amsterdam Sephardi System of Education

The school of the Sephardi community in Amsterdam occasioned great admiration among Jewish visitors from other countries, especially rabbinic scholars from central and eastern Europe. They were impressed by its organization, its systematic curriculum, and by the new division of the classes according to the age of the pupils. The founders of the Hebra de Talmud Tora (Talmud Torah Society) of Amsterdam in 1616, the body responsible for administering the school, were influenced by the syllabus prevalent in the Jewish communities of Italy during the Renaissance. Rabbi Mortera, who was from Venice, was apparently responsible for bringing the model of Jewish schools from his native city to Amsterdam. However, the Catholic schools, where the first Sephardim in Amsterdam had studied, also served as a model for imitation. Above all, the Sephardi educational system in Amsterdam was influenced by the pedagogical innovations introduced by the Jesuits in their educational institutions.

Membership in the Hebra de Talmud Tora was voluntary, and the members were required to pay monthly dues (the *tamid*) of half a guilder to finance the salaries of the *rubissim* (the teachers of the various classes), to purchase books, and to provide assistance for needy pupils. The *parnasim* were deeply involved in the school, supervising the order and discipline of the pupils and making certain that the *rubissim* were diligent in their work.⁶²

⁶⁰ L. Fuks and R. G. Fuks-Mansfeld, Hebrew Typography in the Northern Netherlands 1585–1815: Historical Evaluation and Descriptive Bibliography, 2 vols. (Leiden, 1984–7), vol. i, 99–135.

⁶¹ Menasseh ben Israel, *Espérance d'Israël*, introduction, translation, and notes by H. Méchoulan and G. Nahon (Paris, 1979); S. Rauschenbach, *Judentum für Christen: Vermittlung und Selbstbehauptung Menasseh ben Israels in den gelehrten Debatten des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin, 2012).

⁶² A. Bergmann, 'Ets Haim: Tradition and Innovation in Jewish education' (MA diss., Columbia University, 2006), 16–22.

The Sephardi school in Amsterdam served all the male children of the community, but, as was the custom at that time, it was not open to girls. Until the end of the eighteenth century there was no educational framework in this community for girls and young women. The wealthy Sephardi families hired private tutors to teach their daughters to read and write in Portuguese, along with the basic elements of the Jewish religion, and sometimes women's handicrafts were taught as well. Some girls also had private lessons in Spanish, French, and Dutch, and even Hebrew. Some of them received a musical education and learned to play an instrument, and a few were taught how to deal in commerce. However, there is much evidence of Sephardi women who could not read and write and were not even able to sign their names. The Sephardi ethos forbade women to be exposed to the public sphere, and for that reason the lessons for girls took place in their homes.⁶³

By contrast, all the Sephardi boys in the city were supposed to study in the community school, not just the poor boys, as was the case in many other communities, where rich families hired private tutors for their sons. The school was intended to provide an integral Jewish education and to prepare the boys and young men to observe the commandments and participate in services in the synagogue. The *parnasim* insisted that the boys pray every day under the supervision of their teachers and that they should recite psalms before evening prayers. Under the influence of Jesuit education, public oral examinations were held in the school, open to members of the community. The children in the primary class were tested every month, and the *parnasim* particularly examined their pronunciation of Hebrew vowels. Unlike the Jesuit practice, where the children were expected to begin school with a knowledge of reading and writing, in the Sephardi school in Amsterdam children were taught the elements of reading in the first grade, as was done in the Latin schools in Holland. Each *medras* (class) was housed in a separate room with its own library for the pupils' needs.

In 1637 the Ets Haim (Tree of Life) Society was formed, of which Rabbi Mortera was the chief architect. It was intended to provide financial support to pupils, but one of its chief aims was to encourage the talented and older students to prolong their studies so they could be trained as scholars and rabbis. A stipend for living expenses, called *aspaca*, was intended solely for poor students, on condition that they satisfy the academic demands and study Talmud for at least one year. The name Ets Haim was eventually applied to the entire educational institution.⁶⁴

For a certain time the Beth Israel congregation maintained a school of its own,

⁶³ T. Levie Bernfeld, 'Sephardi Women in Holland's Golden Age', in J. R. Lieberman (ed.), *Sephardi Family Life in the Early Modern Diaspora* (Waltham, Mass., 2011), 177–222: 189–91.

⁶⁴ M. C. Paraira and J. S. da Silva Rosa, Gedenkschrift uitgegeven ter gelegenheid van het 300-jarig bestaan der onderwijsinrichtingen Talmud Tora en Ets Haïm bij de Port. Israël. Gemeente te Amsterdam (Amsterdam, 1916; repr. in 1971 in J. Meijer, Encyclopaedia Sefardica Neerlandica, ii. 73–84); W. C. Pieterse, Daniel Levi de Barrios als geschiedschrijver van de Portugees-Israelietische Gemeente te Amsterdam in zijn 'Triumpho del Govierno Popular' (Amsterdam, 1968), 97–105; Swetschinski, Reluctant Cosmopolitans, 210–11; Bergmann, 'Ets Haim', 28–35.

founded in 1626. However, when the three congregations were united in 1639, it was merged with the other school, and the united institution was given a new building. In 1675, with the establishment of the Esnoga, the school was moved to the outer perimeter of the synagogue.⁶⁵

At first there were seven classes, which became six in 1641. The studies progressed gradually from the elementary to the advanced. In the first class the boys learned how to read the Torah portions with cantillation marks. Then they learned how to translate the portions into Spanish and they studied the prophets with Rashi's commentary and religious laws and regulations. They did not study Talmud with Tosafot until the two highest classes. Special commemorations would take place when the students in the highest *medras* finished studying a tractate of the Talmud.

The boys would begin their studies at the age of 6 and attend the highest class at barmitzvah, aged 13. Classes were held every day except for the sabbath and Jewish holidays. Unlike the practice in typical Jewish schools in central and eastern Europe, there was an organized daily schedule during the morning and afternoon. At first classes were held from eight to eleven in the morning and then from two to five in the afternoon. During the winter the afternoon hours were adapted to the length of the day. Later on it was decided to begin studies half an hour later. Wealthy men would hire private tutors to teach their sons during the intermissions between morning and afternoon classes. These supplementary lessons could be arithmetic, Dutch, and in some cases even Latin or other languages. These subjects were not taught in the community school, but the congregation provided special teachers for the poor children to teach them Dutch and arithmetic. After 1673 it employed four such teachers.⁶⁶

Special emphasis was given to the study of Hebrew grammar, which was studied separately in the fourth and fifth grades. Some of the teachers who taught this subject, such as the rabbis Moseh Raphael d'Aguilar, Isaac Aboab da Fonseca, Selomoh de Oliveyra, and Jacob Judah Leon (Templo), wrote grammar books for the use of their pupils. These books were written on the model of Latin grammar books that were used in the Latin schools of Holland, where the pupils studied Latin rather than Dutch. The pupils practised speaking in Hebrew outside school hours as well, and they also learned to compose rhymes and poems. This was an effort to connect with the culture of the Golden Age of medieval Sephardi Jewry.⁶⁷

The study of grammar was a first step in introducing the trivium in the curriculum. In 1665 Rabbi Moseh Raphael d'Aguilar (c.1620–79) introduced the systematic study of rhetoric, and each of his pupils was required in turn to deliver in public a question and argument about the portion of the week during the summer months of the school year. These homilies were recited on sabbath afternoons. D'Aguilar was born in

⁶⁵ Bergmann, 'Ets Haim', 23-4, 27.

⁶⁶ Swetschinski, Reluctant Cosmopolitans, 210–11. 67 Bergmann, 'Ets Haim', 41–53.

Portugal and studied in Ets Haim as a youth. In 1642 he accompanied Aboab da Fonseca when he was invited to serve as the rabbi in Recife, the Dutch colony in Brazil, and he himself served as the cantor there. He was a gifted teacher, and upon his return to Amsterdam he opened classes in his home. Subsequently the *parnasim* hired him to teach in Ets Haim, where he taught Talmud as well as grammar and composition. He seems to have been the one who introduced two additional subjects of the trivium: rhetoric and logic. He wrote *Tratado de la Retórica* ('Treatise of Rhetoric') in Spanish, based on classical works, 'for the benefit of our students', and he apparently introduced the study of logic in the Talmud classes. D'Aguilar also wrote treatises on logic, one in Spanish and one in Portuguese, for use in the upper classes.⁶⁸

The Talmud lesson in the upper class was the high point of studies in Ets Haim. The first hakham in the hierarchy was responsible for teaching it, as long as his health permitted. Mortera taught it until 1654, six years before his death, and Aboab da Fonseca taught it until 1680, when he turned 75. After him the lesson was entrusted to Jacob Sasportas (1610–98), a Sephardi rabbi from an illustrious rabbinical family who was born in Oran, Algeria, and served as hakham in Hamburg, London, and Livorno. In each of these places he displayed determination and zeal, both in defending the halakhah and in protecting the status of the rabbinate. During the period of Sabbatean fervour he was one of the few who opposed the followers of Shabetai Tsevi, engaging in an extensive correspondence from Hamburg with disciples and opponents of the messianic pretender. Of all the Sephardi rabbis in Amsterdam during the seventeenth century he was the most prominent halakhic authority. This can be seen in the responsa he drafted, which later appeared under the title of Ohel ya'akov ('The Tent of Jacob', 1737). In 1681 he finally settled in Amsterdam and inherited Aboab da Fonseca's position as the hakham of the community, after having served at his side for about ten years in the rabbinic college.69

After Sasportas's death, Rabbi Selomoh de Oliveyra (1633–1708) was appointed in his place. He taught in Ets Haim only until 1700, though he continued to serve as the chief *ḥakham* until his death. Oliveyra's contribution to studies in Ets Haim was enormous. In addition to being one of the most outstanding and beloved teachers, he also wrote poetry and composed a number of texts on rhetoric and other works for the benefit of the students, and instruction in the higher classes, such as books of Hebrew and Aramaic grammar.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ S. Berger, Classical Oratory and the Sephardim of Amsterdam: Rabbi Aguilar's 'Tratado de la Retórica' (Hilversum, 1996), 9–22, 41–119; J. Melkman, David Franco Mendes: A Hebrew Poet (Amsterdam, 1951), 24.

⁶⁹ I. Tishby, introduction to Y. Sasportas's *Tsitsat novel tsevi* (Jerusalem, 1954), 13–39; M. Goldish, 'Hakham Jacob Sasportas and the Former Conversos', in S. Berger, E. Schrijver, and I. Zwiep (eds.), *Mapping Jewish Amsterdam: The Early Modern Perspective. Dedicated to Yosef Kaplan on the Occasion of his Retirement* (= StR 44) (Leuven, 2012), 149–72.

⁷⁰ Bergmann, 'Ets Haim', 79–87; M. Bensabat Amzalak, Selomoh de Oliveyra: Noticia Biobibliografica (Lisbon, 1928).

In 1698 Oliveyra initiated one of the most significant innovations in the educational system of Ets Haim, which became a distinguishing mark of the institution: the students in the upper class were required to write halakhic decisions on questions addressed to them by other students, in the style of the Amsterdam rabbinical court. These decisions apparently served as final assignments before rabbinical ordination, like university dissertations. These questions and responsa were presented to other students in the upper class in the presence of all the rabbis. With the appointment of the <code>hakhamim</code> Rabbi David Israel Athias (d. 1753) and Rabbi Isaac Hayyim Abendana de Brito (d. 1760), the Ets Haim yeshiva began the regular publication of responsa written by senior students and ordained scholars, in collections called *Peri ets ḥayim* ('Fruit of the Tree of Life'), from 1728.⁷¹

During the first half of the eighteenth century the standing of the rabbinate and of the rabbinic court increased in the Sephardi community, although the court remained subordinate to the Mahamad. The stronger position of the rabbinate and the expansion of its influence in the community, however, are open to misinterpretation. It would be wrong to conclude that the Sephardi community had become more disciplined in religious respects. Rather, many members of the community had removed themselves from its activities, and the bond between the economic elite and its institutions was weakened; thus the presence of those remaining strictly loyal to the halakhah made itself felt more strongly. While it is true that the authority of the rabbis and rabbinic scholars increased, this authority affected a community that was shrinking in numbers.⁷²

The State of Religion and Learning in the Amsterdam Ashkenazi Community

The religious life of the Ashkenazi Jews was distinctive in character. They did not have to invent a tradition, like their Sephardi brethren, for they brought with them the Jewish tradition from the Rhine region, from Swabia, and from Bohemia. While they respected the Sephardi education system, they lacked the resources that would have enabled them to copy it successfully. The immigration of Jews from Poland–Lithuania in 1655 changed this picture slightly, for they were more learned, though after they joined the Germans they ceased to be an independent factor. The Sephardim cultivated the connection with the Lithuanian Torah scholars because of their admiration for their erudition, and, for their part, the Lithuanian rabbis preferred the Sephardim to the German Jews. Thus, for example, Rabbi Moses Ribkes was employed in the Jesiba de los Pintos, which was established in Rotterdam by the wealthy brothers Abraham and

⁷¹ M. M. Hirsch, Frucht vom Baum des Lebens (Berlin, 1936); Kaplan, 'Eighteenth-Century Rulings', 8–11.

⁷² Y. Kaplan, 'Secularizing the Portuguese Jews: Integration and Orthodoxy in Early Modern Judaism', *Simon Dubnow Institute Yearbook*, 6 (2007), 99–110.

David Pinto in 1650. Ribkes, though he was born in Prague, had moved to Vilna, where he became a rabbi and established a rich library. He arrived in Amsterdam as a refugee in 1655, and there he published *Be'er hagolah* ('The Well of Exile', Amsterdam, 1661–4), an index to the sources of the famous code of Jewish law, the *Shulḥan arukh*, compiled by Joseph Caro (1488–1575).⁷³

Eight rabbis served the Ashkenazi community up to the beginning of the eighteenth century, all of whom were educated in Germany, Bohemia, or Poland, and only a few of whom can be said to have been prominent scholars. Some became involved in disputes with the *parnasim* over salaries and authority. One of these was Rabbi Moses ben Jacob Weile of Prague, the first rabbi of the congregation, who left in 1643.⁷⁴ Rabbi David ben Aryeh Leib Lida, who was originally from Poland, arrived in Amsterdam from Mainz. While in Amsterdam he managed to publish some of his books. His term (1680–5) was full of crises and conflicts, and the support of the Council of Four Lands and of the Sephardi Mahamad, which intervened on his behalf, proved of no avail.⁷⁵

The distinction between the *parnasim* and the rabbis was not always preserved in the Ashkenazi community. Although here, too, the rabbi was officially subject to the authority of the *parnasim*, certain rabbis, such as Rabbi Isaac Emmerich (1643–7), and to some degree Rabbi Isaac Dekingen of Worms (1660–72), were in fact 'talmudic *parnasim*', that is, they were both *parnasim* and rabbinic scholars. Rabbi Dekingen's dependence on the Ashkenazi *parnasim* found expression during the visit of the Shabatean prophet Shabtai Raphael to Amsterdam in 1667. While the Sephardi Jews opposed him vehemently, most of the Ashkenazim honoured him. Dekingen was forced to lodge Shabtai Raphael in his home, despite his opposition to the man, for fear that the Ashkenazi *parnasim* would discharge him. As a rabbi, Abraham Worms (1648–60) exerted considerable influence, but despite his high reputation his salary was quite modest: 50 guilders, as opposed to the 600-guilder salary of Hakham Mortera of the Sephardi community.⁷⁶

The state of learning in the Ashkenazi community left much to be desired. Education was supposedly under the supervision of the chief rabbi, but was in fact in the hands of private teachers, the best of whom came from Poland. During the eighteenth century the Ashkenazi society expanded. Though large sections of it remained poor, the position of its middle class became stronger, and their economic prosperity helped to strengthen the community institutionally as well as culturally. At this time the Ashkenazi community of Amsterdam had become a significant factor in the Ashkenazi world, and important rabbis such as Rabbi Aryeh Leib of Kalisz (1708–9) and others

⁷³ Sluys, 'Hoogduits-Joods Amsterdam', 319, 322, 340; Pieterse, *Daniel Levi de Barrios*, 111, 113; Fuks and Fuks-Mansfeld, *Hebrew Typography in the Northern Netherlands* 1585–1815, ii. 311–12, 322–3.

⁷⁴ Sluys, 'Hoogduits-Joods Amsterdam', 309, 312, 315.

⁷⁵ Ibid. 331, 340–1, 350; Fuks, 'Opperrabijn Lida', 166–79.

⁷⁶ Sluys, 'Hoogduits-Joods Amsterdam', 309–10, 315–16, 321–2, 324.

were keen to go to Amsterdam and serve as chief rabbis.⁷⁷ New charity and study associations were established. However, the structural and organizational problems of the congregation remained unresolved. Disputes between the parnasim and the rabbis, and among the parnasim themselves, constantly broke out, leading to frequent appeals to the Portuguese Mahamad to serve as arbitrator, as well as to calls for intervention by the Amsterdam municipal authorities in the community's internal disputes. One such dispute, with the chief rabbi, Tsevi Hirsch ben Jacob Ashkenazi (Hakham Tsevi, 1710-14), had wide repercussions. He was one of the leading rabbinic authorities in Europe at the time, but was forced by the parnasim, following a prolonged disagreement, to leave the city. When he had been invited to Amsterdam in 1710 by the Ashkenazi congregation, he was promised a salary of one thousand Reichstaler, almost twice the salary of the Sephardi hakhamim, and was received by the Ashkenazi Jews with royal honours. In 1713, however, a sharp controversy broke out between him and his congregation. Hakham Tsevi supported the opposition in the Ashkenazi congregation to that parts of the new community regulations that strengthened the Mahamad. The Ashkenazi parnasim decided to discharge him, but the opposition appealed to the municipality, which decided to appoint the Sephardi parnasim as mediators. The latter ruled in favour of Hakham Tsevi, stating that according to his contract his appointment was for life. For their part, the Ashkenazi parnasim decided to enlist the Christian scholar Willem Surenhuys (1666–1729), who had translated the Mishnah into Latin, and he, in turn, consulted professors at a number of universities. The Christian scholars ruled in favour of the Ashkenazi parnasim, but to no avail, since under pressure from the municipality the community was forced to extend Hakham Tsevi's appointment. However, in that year Nehemiah Hiya Hayon, a kabbalist with Shabatean leanings, visited the city and asked the assistance of the hakham of the Sephardi community, Rabbi Solomon Ayllion, in distributing his kabbalistic book, Meheimanuta dekala ('The Bridal Veil'). Hakham Tsevi supported Rabbi Moses Hagiz, an emissary from the Land of Israel, against Hayon, and together they circulated tracts accusing him of being a believer in Shabetai Tsevi. When the Sephardi Mahamad approved the distribution of Hayon's book, Hakham Tsevi wrote a pamphlet in which he analysed the Shabatean character of the book, circulating it among the members of the Sephardi community. Despite the insistent demand of the Sephardi Mahamad, Hakham Tsevi refused to appear before it, even after the leadership of the Ashkenazi community asked him to do so. As a result, the Sephardi Mahamad excommunicated both Hakham Tsevi and Hagiz, and ultimately they were both forced to leave the city. 78 Rabbi Abraham Berliner Halberstadt (1716–30) was appointed Tsevi's successor. He received only a third of the

⁷⁷ Sluys, 'Hoogduits-Joods Amsterdam', 358.

⁷⁸ J. d'Ancona, 'De Portugese Gemeente "Talmoed Tora" te Amsterdam tot 1795', in H. Brugmans and A. Frank (eds.), *Geschiedenis der Joden in Nederland*, vol. i (Amsterdam, 1940), 294–7; Sluys, 'Hoogduits-Joods Amsterdam', 344–6, 349–52, 368, 370; Tal (ed.), *The Ashkenazi Community*, 21.

salary of Hakham Tsevi and took his place until the former's death. ⁷⁹ In the five following years the Ashkenazim failed to find a rabbi they could agree on. In 1735 Rabbi Elazar ben Samuel Shmelke Margaliot Rokeach was appointed as the chief Ashkenazi rabbi, a post he held until he moved to the Land of Israel in 1740. He was a well-known rabbinical figure who had served as a rabbi in a number of important communities. Before coming to Amsterdam, he was the rabbi of Brody. He was received with great honour in Amsterdam, even though his appointment had not been made by the *parnasim* but by the city authorities, who chose him from a list of seven candidates. ⁸⁰

At this time the Ashkenazi community of Amsterdam had become a significant factor in the Ashkenazi world, and important rabbis such as those already mentioned were keen to go to Amsterdam and serve as chief rabbis. In contrast to the modest salary of former years, the chief rabbis were now paid more generously. Although they remained subordinate to the *parnasim*, and their desire for independence was curbed, there is no doubt that their presence ensured that Ashkenazi Amsterdam became an independent Torah centre, exercising influence on Ashkenazi Jewry in western Europe, and by means of its printing industry even beyond. The chief rabbi (1740–55), Aryeh Leib ben Shaul Löwenstamm of Rzeszów, founded the Beth Midrash (House of Study) synagogue, which was consecrated with great pomp in 1752. During his term, in 1750, the Naye Shul synagogue was expanded.⁸¹

The Ashkenazi synagogue services were also influenced by traditions they brought with them from Poland. The cantors who arrived in Amsterdam from eastern Europe tried to introduce innovations in the prayers, but these were not always accepted by the congregation. Sometimes the innovations even aroused fierce opposition and caused fistfights in the synagogue. The cantor Yehiel Mikhael of Lublin, who led services in the great synagogue between 1700 and 1712, brought with him the custom of accompaniment by two *meshorerim* (singers), a *zinger*, and a *bass*. This innovation aroused the opposition of a considerable number of the members, who preferred the old style, which had been established by the local cantor, Arieh Leib ben Zeev Wolf.⁸²

With respect to education, a chasm lay between the organized system of the Sephardim and the slack and unsystematic education provided in the Ashkenazi community. The first Ashkenazi beit midrash in the city was established while Chief Rabbi Leib Harif was in office (1685–1706) and on his initiative, nearly a century after the parallel Sephardi institution had been established. Without doubt, over the years, the Sephardi educational system began to serve as a model for the Ashkenazim, and

⁷⁹ Sluys, 'Hoogduits-Joods Amsterdam', 339, 352, 354, 357–8.

⁸⁰ Ibid. 360, 367, 380; I. Bartal, 'The 'Aliyah'' of R. Elazar Rokeach (1740)' (Heb.), in J. Michman (ed.), *Studies on the History of Dutch Jewry*, vol. iv (Jerusalem, 1984), 7–25.

⁸¹ Sluys, 'Hoogduits-Joods Amsterdam', 368-70, 373, 380.

⁸² L. Hirschel, 'Cultuur en volksleven', in Brugmans and Frank (eds.), *Geschiedenis der Joden in Nederland*, i. 488; M. H. Gans, *Memoorbook: History of Dutch Jewry from the Renaissance to 1940* (Baarn, 1971), 136.

in the community regulations of 1711 the Ashkenazi Talmud Torah confraternity also received the name 'Ets Haim'. 83 Nevertheless, the Ashkenazim were unable to compete with the pedagogical methods of the Sephardim. In works written by the Ashkenazim in Amsterdam in the first half of the eighteenth century, serious complaints were occasionally voiced because the pupils were not familiar with the Bible and did not learn Hebrew properly, as, for example, in the introduction to the textbook Melamed siah ('Conversation Teacher', first printed in Amsterdam in 1710). The author, Rabbi Elyakim Melamed Shatz of Komorna, who had arrived in Amsterdam from Galicia at the end of the seventeenth century, paints a gloomy picture of education among the Ashkenazim. According to him, the children had no conception of grammar, and for that reason they were unable to interpret the words of the Torah correctly. He placed the blame for the situation on the teachers, whose preparation was inadequate. His book is a glossary of the Pentateuch and the Five Scrolls, with definitions of the chosen words in Yiddish, as an aid for better instruction. Melamed siah is far simpler than other glossaries that already existed among the Ashkenazim, but which were too complex for the low level of the teachers in Amsterdam.84 Another textbook, Mafte'aḥ leshon hakodesh ('Key to the Holy Tongue'), published in Amsterdam in 1713, was the first Hebrew grammar book in Yiddish as an aid for the teaching of Torah. In his introduction, the author, a proselyte named Israel ben Avraham Avinu, also complains about the ignorance that prevailed among the Ashkenazim in Amsterdam: the pupils were unable to translate the Bible correctly and understood it in a faulty manner.85 The system applied in the Sephardi educational institution, where the pupils were required to translate the biblical text into Spanish, with a strong emphasis on instruction in Hebrew grammar, gradually influenced Ashkenazi society.

Between Jews and Christians

The decision of the Provincial States of Holland on 13 December 1619 to grant Jews permission to live in the cities of Holland was coupled to the stipulation that every member of the Assembly was free to decide the issue according to his own lights. This stipulation opened up new possibilities for the Jewish residents of Holland, since every town represented in the Assembly could now set its own conditions based on practical, economic, and social considerations.⁸⁶ In the event, the municipal authorities

⁸³ Tal (ed.), The Ashkenazi Community, 20.

⁸⁴ C. Turniansky, 'On Didactic Literature in Yiddish in Amsterdam (1699–1749)', in J. Michman (ed.), Studies on the History of Dutch Jewry, vol. iv (1984), 163–77: 168–9; S. Berger, Producing Redemption in Amsterdam: Early Modern Yiddish Books in Paratextual Perspective (Leiden, 2013), 114, 115 n. 74, 143, 189.

⁸⁵ Turniansky, 'On Didactic Literature in Yiddish', 166–8; Berger, Producing Redemption in Amsterdam, 102.

⁸⁶ H. Grotius, Remonstrantie nopende de ordre dije in de landen van Hollandt ende Westvrieslandt dijent gestelt op de Joden, ed. J. Meijer (Amsterdam, 1949), 101; A. H. Huussen Jr., 'The Legal Position of Sephardi Jews in Holland, circa 1600', DJH iii. 27–38; id., 'The Legal Position of the Jews in the Dutch Republic 1590–1796', in J. Israel and R. Salverda (eds.), Dutch Jewry: Its History and Secular Culture (1500–2000) (Leiden, 2002), 25–41.

concerned implemented the policy of Jewish admission on the basis of pragmatic considerations and in a dispassionate fashion, and this practice was followed elsewhere in the Republic as well. It is certainly possible to agree with the statement that 'de joden waren een typische getolereerde maar gediscrimineerde minderheidsgroep' (the Jews were a typical minority group, tolerated but discriminated against), ⁸⁷ but with two reservations. First, in the cities of the Republic where they were tolerated, the Jews felt relatively secure and free in a manner unknown to them anywhere else at that time; second, in the view of the Calvinist religious establishment and of most theologians active in Holland at the time of the Republic, the Jewish minority was not 'a typical minority group'. The intense study of the Scriptures was of particular significance in the Dutch Republic. It was accompanied by a growth in Hebraic studies, based on a desire to understand the rise of Christianity and its message and to underpin polemical arguments against Judaism. Against the background of all these trends, the presence of Jews in the Republic was endowed with special importance.

During the seventeenth century, the official Calvinist establishment generally opposed the granting of rights to the Jews or the extension of such rights as existed. It sought to limit their presence in many ways, afraid of the harm Jews might inflict on Christian society. First it tried to prevent Jews from holding public prayers (a prohibition that also applied to Catholics and to non-Calvinist Protestant sects). Thus the Council of the Reformed Church in Amsterdam intervened with the municipal authorities in 1612 to prevent the erection of a synagogue by the Neveh Shalom congregation.⁸⁸

The consolidation of the Seven United Provinces was bound up with the process of Calvinization. Though that process was aimed mainly at Catholic and Protestant dissenters, it naturally heightened religious animosity towards the Jews, who were seen as an active and dangerous element, winning souls among the Christian population and reviling belief in Jesus in their writings and prayers. In the various synods of the Calvinist church, frequent mention is made of the 'insolence' of the Jews.⁸⁹ The building of the Ashkenazi synagogue in Amsterdam, and even more so that of the Sephardi synagogue, might have created the impression that Judaism had gained a great deal of power in the Republic. This incited the synods held in Dordrecht (1676) and Delft (1677) to pass a series of resolutions intended to attract Jews to Christianity and to convert them to Calvinism. Typical of this approach was the demand to rid the Church of all behaviour offensive to the Jews and to present a model of Christianity worthy of imitation. A series of practical resolutions was adopted, one of which spoke of the need to invite rabbis for friendly discussions of biblical subjects. It was also decided that care

 $^{^{87}}$ A. H. Huussen Jr., 'De houding van de Nederlander tegenover minderheden', *Documentatieblad Werkgroep Achttiende Eeuw*, 24 (1992), 75–85: 75.

⁸⁸ Fuks-Mansfeld, De Sefardim, 52 ff.; Swetschinski, Reluctant Cosmopolitans, 11–12.

⁸⁹ J. van den Berg, Joden en christenen in Nederland gedurende de zeventiende eeuw (Kampen, 1969), 24.

should be taken lest Jewish converts to Christianity suffer financially as a result of abandoning Judaism. The Church authorities were asked to appoint and finance two scholars who would be responsible for all disputes with the Jews, and to that end would have to translate the Talmud into Latin. 90

It should be pointed out that there were Dutch Hebraists even earlier, such as Constantijn l'Empereur in Leiden, who was asked in 1634 by the curators of the university to take up theological cudgels against the Jews, and Johannes Leusden, who was given the same task at the University of Utrecht in 1650. The Provincial States of Holland responded favourably to proposals to promote the conversion of the Jews in a resolution passed on 9 August 1678, on condition 'dat geen van die middelen komen aan te lopen tegen de vrijheid der consciëntie' (that none of the means used would infringe freedom of conscience). Se

Disputations between Sephardi Jews and Christians took place in Amsterdam in one form or another from the beginning of the seventeenth century. Before the arrival of the Iberian New Christians in western Europe, there was no other group of Jews so well versed in Christian theology, many of them having received a very comprehensive and thorough Christian education. But not only the polemicists who were born and educated as New Christians in Spain and Portugal displayed impressive expertise in Christian theology and religious literature. Indeed, Rabbi Saul Levi Mortera, who was born to an Ashkenazi family in Venice, wrote an extremely detailed and penetrating critical analysis of the New Testament and the foundations of Christian dogma. His work, Tratado da Verdade da Lei de Moisés Oposta à falsidade das Outras Leis ('Treatise on the Truth of the Law of Moses in Contrast to the Falsity of Other Laws'), was written in 1659, in the last years of his life, and he did not manage to finish the final chapter. The treatise purports to address radical Protestants to persuade them to abandon 'the lies of Christianity' and cleave to the true law of God. Jesus appears in this book as a Jew loyal to the Law of Moses, and Mortera invests considerable effort in presenting the common denominator between the Old and New Testaments. Following a meeting between him and a Protestant Socinian scholar around 1635, he discovered the existence of Christians who rejected belief in the Trinity and viewed the essence of divinity in a manner similar to that of Judaism. 93 He supposedly wrote his work to open the eyes of these 'novos reformados' even further and to bring them across the threshold of Judaism.94

⁹⁰ Van den Berg, Joden en christenen in Nederland, 35–7.

⁹¹ Ibid. 12 ff.; P. T. van Rooden, Theology, Biblical Scholarship, and Rabbinical Studies in the Seventeenth Century: Constantijn l'Empereur (1591–1648) (Leiden, 1989).

⁹³ Salomon, 'Saul Levi Mortera en zijn "Traktaat betreffende de waarheid van de Wet van Mozes", pp. lxxxi–cvi.

⁹⁴ B. Fisher, 'Opening the Eyes of the *Novos Reformados*: Rabbi Saul Levi Morteira, Radical Christianity, and the Jewish Reclamation of Jesus, 1620–1660', in Berger, Schrijver, and Zwiep (eds.), *Mapping Jewish Amsterdam*, 117–48.

Although Sephardi Jews did not initiate the disputations, they sometimes responded favourably to invitations to participate in them, for these arguments helped them to strengthen their new identity and to justify their return to Judaism. Christians, especially Calvinists, viewed debates with Jews as an important means of convincing them of the truth of Christianity and hence of converting them to it. It should be stressed that in Amsterdam the Jews encountered not only Calvinists but also a large variety of members of other Christian churches, including Catholics and Protestant dissenters. The latter included exiles from various countries, and polemical theological discussions were also held with them. 95 In 1608 the Christian Hebraist Hugh Broughton, who was associated with the Brownists, the Anglican separatists founded by Robert Browne (c.1550–1633), held a debate in the city with the Jewish physician David Farar. This was the first in a long series of disputations between Jews and Christians during that century. However, it would be a mistake to relate this theological dispute to the others, since it was an event that took place on the margins of the local Calvinist establishment. The dispute between Farrar and Broughton was arranged by Matthew Slade, who was the rector of the Latin School in Amsterdam at that time. Moreover, the English Reformed Church in Amsterdam was at first an integral part of the Dutch Reformed Church. The radical Calvinists of Broughton's type were moved by powerful faith in the imminent return of Jesus and the fulfilment of all the biblical prophecies. One of these was the conversion of the Jews, and Broughton regarded debates with the Jews as a means of advancing this goal. Between 1605 and 1608 he published seven Hebrew books in Amsterdam and another five in Latin and English. Central to all of them was the subject of the messiah. ⁹⁶ In 1644 and 1645 Jan Pieterszoon Beelthouwer of Enkhuizen debated with several Sephardim, including Rabbi Menasseh ben Israel, and in 1660 an intense argument took place between Jacobus Alting, who taught oriental languages in Groningen, and the rabbi Abraham Senior Coronel. Their correspondence was in Hebrew, as was the courteous exchange of letters between Antonius Hulsius and the learned rabbi Jacob Abendana, which took place while Hulsius still lived in Breda, before moving to Leiden in 1668 to teach Hebrew there.⁹⁷

In addition to the Sephardi polemicists who debated with Christian theologians about matters of faith, and whose works were printed, there was an Ashkenazi, Eleasar Soesman, who (originally under the pseudonym 'den Geleerden Jood' (the learned Jew)) in 1741–2 debated with three anonymous authors and with Jacob Fundam, a Portuguese Jewish convert to Christianity, about points of conflict between Judaism

⁹⁵ Kaplan, From Christianity to Judaism, 235–62, 270–3.

⁹⁶ Fuks-Mansfeld, *De Sefardim*, 89–90; Fuks and Fuks-Mansfeld, *Hebrew Typography in the Northern Netherlands*, i. 94–9; Y. Kaplan, 'Between Calvinists and Jews in Seventeenth-Century Amsterdam', in I. Y. Yuval and R. Ben-Shalom (eds.), *Conflict and Religious Conversation in Latin Christendom: Studies in Honour of Ora Limor* (Turnhout, 2014), 277–303: 279–81.

⁹⁷ Van den Berg, *Joden en christenen*, 12–14, 38n; S. B. J. Zilverberg, 'Jan Pieterszoon Beelthouwer (c.1603–c.1669) en de Joden', *StR* 3 (1969), 156–67.

and Christianity. He also disputed with two Calvinist theologians, Johann Wilhelm Kels and Eggo Tonkens van Hoevenberg. What is surprising about this case is the direct and open way in which Soesman expressed his positions regarding the errors he found in the Christian tradition. In 1737 Soesman had re-edited and published the Yiddish translation of a polemical work by Salomon Zvi Hirsh of Aufhausen, *Sefer hanitsaḥon tsori hayehudim* ('The Book of Victory over the Persecutor of the Jews'), against the apostate Samuel Friedrich Brenz, which had earlier been printed in a Hebrew, German, and Yiddish version in 1615 under the title *Der Jüdische Theriak*. 99

The Sephardi parnasim were adamantly opposed to holding religious debates with Christians. In a joint decision of the ruling bodies of the three Sephardi congregations, issued in 1630, it was unequivocally forbidden, under pain of excommunication, to debate about religion with Christians, so as not to endanger the freedom enjoyed by the Jews of Amsterdam. The parnasim explicitly mentioned women and children as well, wishing to prevent any kind of public insult against the Christian religion in the public domain. Immediately after the unification of the three congregations in 1638, a regulation was passed forbidding debates with Christians and the expression of insults against their religion. Similarly it was forbidden to circumcise gentiles except those of Spanish and Portuguese origin who belonged to the nação. Shortly afterwards the Mahamad of the Sephardi community received a complaint from the civic authorities against Sephardi Jews for uttering insults against Christianity, behaviour which aroused vehement protests from the Calvinist preachers in the city's churches. The parnasim threatened that anyone who violated the prohibition would be turned over to the civic authorities. A few days later a rumour reached them that one of the preachers had expressed himself harshly against statements that Jews had allegedly made against the Christian religion, and for that reason he demanded that the civic authorities expel all the Jews from Amsterdam. The parnasim were frightened and threatened to punish with fines and excommunication anyone who violated the regulations and spoke against Christianity. 100

However, the prohibitions enacted by the *parnasim* were unable to prevent private theological discussions between rabbis and Christian scholars. Constantijn L'Empereur, professor of Hebrew and theology at the University of Leiden, bought books from Menasseh ben Israel and also visited Jewish homes and the Sephardi synagogue. He mentioned in one of his writings that the Jew who taught him rabbinical literature encountered difficulties with the heads of the community in response to his public statement that he would make use of his knowledge of Jewish sources to attack Juda-

⁹⁸ J. W. Wesselius, 'Eleazar Soesman en de Amsterdamse polemieken van 1742', *StR* 27 (1993), 13–35; B. Wallet, 'Links in a Chain: Early Modern Yiddish Historiography from the Northern Netherlands, 1743–1812' (doctoral thesis, University of Amsterdam, 2012), 76–7.

⁹⁹ Berger, Producing Redemption in Amsterdam, 20, 35, 147.

¹⁰⁰ Kaplan, 'Between Calvinists and Jews', 289–94.

ism.¹⁰¹ In a decision recorded in 1641 it was forbidden to convey Jewish works to gentiles in any manner without prior authorization from the Mahamad. However, during the seventeenth century quite a few Jewish sources, both printed and manuscript, came into the possession of Christian scholars (PLATE 22).¹⁰²

The decisions of the synods in Dordrecht and Delft created new opportunities for theological debates with Jews: many Sephardim spoke out vehemently and openly against the Christian religion, so much so that several theologians in Leiden complained to the States General of Holland and asked them to intervene. Against this background the Mahamad of the Sephardi community of Amsterdam decided in August 1677 to forbid members of the community, on penalty of excommunication, to hold any debates with Christians on matters of faith, 'both those that are held in public and those that are held in secret', because such disputes occasioned complaint by the preachers of Leiden, and they conveyed their apprehension that the States General might be influenced by it.¹⁰³

But neither the complaints of the Calvinist theologians nor the threats of the Mahamad could prevent disputes and debates of this kind from taking place. Almost all the theological and polemical works against Christianity written in the Iberian languages were kept out of print because of the internal censorship of the community, but were circulated in manuscript. Many copies of works by Dr Eliahu Montalto, the rabbis Saul Levi Mortera and Moseh Raphael d'Aguilar, Isaac Orobio de Castro, and others were made by professional scribes and calligraphers such as Juda Machabeu, Jacob de Meza, Abraham Machorro, Abraham Fidanque, Jacob Guedelha, and Michael Lopez Pinto. 104 These works are mainly characterized by their fierce and uncompromising anti-Christian tone. It is no coincidence that in the eighteenth century some of them were translated into French and became part of the clandestine literature of the Radical Enlightenment, which found effective ammunition against the Catholic Church in it.

In about 1684 one of the most famous disputations was held in Amsterdam, with Dr Isaac Orobio de Castro (*c*.1617–87), one of the most distinguished scholars of the Sephardi community, facing the Remonstrant theologian Philippus van Limborch (1633–1712), one of the most prominent Christian scholars in western Europe at that time. These oral discussions were put in writing by the two participants, and the

¹⁰¹ Van Rooden, *Theology, Biblical Scholarship and Rabbinical Studies*, 162–7; A. A. Katchen, *Christian Hebraists and Dutch Rabbis* (Cambridge, Mass., 1984), 90–1.

¹⁰² Kaplan, 'Between Calvinists and Jews', 294–5.

¹⁰³ Ibid. 296–8

¹⁰⁴ Numerous copies of these works can be found in the Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana and the Ets Haim Library in Amsterdam, and in many other libraries and book collections elsewhere. Cf. the many examples mentioned in L. Fuks and R. G. Fuks-Mansfeld, Hebrew and Judaic Manuscripts in Amsterdam Public Collections, vol. i: Catalogue of the Manuscripts of the Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana, University Library of Amsterdam (Leiden, 1973); vol. ii: Catalogue of the Manuscripts of the Ets Haim/Livraria Montezinos, Sephardic Community of Amsterdam (Leiden, 1975).

work elicited positive reactions from many theologians and scholars. The encouraging responses of John Locke and Jean LeClerc, friends of Limborch who read the manuscript, led Limborch to publish the whole dispute under the title of *De veritate religionis* christianae. Amica collatio cum erudito judaeo ('Of the Truth of the Christian Religion. A Friendly Conversation with a Jewish Scholar', 1687). The dispute revolved around the messiah and the salvation of the soul, the nature of divine revelation, the reliability of the Old and New Testaments, the observance of the commandments, and the reason for the exile of the Jewish people. The friendly atmosphere and the mutual respect of the disputants did not mask the harsh and barbed nature of their arguments. Limborch considered this dispute the beginning of a bridge that Reformed Christians had to build to effect the conversion of the Jews. He hoped that victory over Orobio would shock the members of the Jewish community, and as a result persuade many of them to adopt the Christian faith. We do not know Orobio's impressions of the dispute, for he died a week after the appearance of the book. According to one source, he concluded the dispute by stating: 'Everyone ought to continue in his own religion, since it is much easier to attack another man's than to prove one's own.'105

The interest taken in Judaism by Christian scholars in Amsterdam is reflected in a long series of treatises—theological, philological, historical, exegetical, and polemical—in which a broad range of nuances can be found, from radical hostility to a fairly tolerant and even philosemitic attitude. The theologian Gisbertus Voetius of Utrecht, a right-wing orthodox Calvinist, argued in 1637 that the faith of the Jews was wholly corrupt, that they hated Christians, and that they dealt with them dishonestly and cruelly. He accordingly considered public Jewish prayer an offence against Christianity. Hulsius, for his part, wrote in the polemical *Rib Jahwe im Jehuda, sive theologiae judaicae* ('The Fight of Jehovah against Judaea, or on Jewish Theology', 1635) that Judaism was the mother of all heresies, and hence of all errors that had entered the Christian Church. ¹⁰⁶

At the same time, however, there were expressions of respect, and even of admiration, for the Jewish people by Dutch theologians, especially by the millenarians, who believed in the imminence of the messianic age and the general conversion of the messiah's people, which would once again be chosen by God as it had been of old. Menasseh ben Israel and Jacob Judah Leon Templo cooperated with some of the millenarians who were associated with Samuel Hartlib, the German-British polymath, and assisted them in some of their projects. Jacob Judah Leon lived for nearly seven years in Middelburg with the Dutch Hebraist and Collegiant Adam Boreel, teaching him Hebrew and preparing a vocalized edition of the Mishnah with him. Hartlib and the members of his circle believed that study of the Mishnah by Jews and Christians

P. T. van Rooden and J. W. Wesselius, 'The Early Enlightenment and Judaism: The "Civil Dispute" between Philippus van Limborch and Isaac Orobio de Castro', StR 21 (1987), 140–53; Kaplan, From Christianity to Judaism, 270–85.
Van den Berg, Joden en christenen, 22–3.

could serve as a bridge helping to bring the Jews closer to Christianity and the Christians to a better understanding of the Judaism from which Jesus came. They assumed that if the Jews went deeper into this work, it would be easier for them to understand the message of early Christianity; for their part the Christians would understand the Jewish roots of their religion better. They regarded the vocalization of the text as vital. Leon Templo and Menasseh ben Israel cooperated with this project because the millenarians were willing to finance the edition, which was printed in 1646 in Menasseh ben Israel's printing house. Nowhere in the body of this book is cooperation with the Christians mentioned, so as not to deter Jews from buying and reading it, and this was done with the full understanding and agreement of Boreel and his friends. 107 One of the most prominent members of Hartlib's circle, Petrus Serrarius, was keenly interested in the messianic expectations of the Jews during the rise of Shabetai Tsevi. 108 Similarly, among the Huguenot exiles who had settled in Holland after the abolition of the Edict of Nantes in 1685 were people with chiliastic beliefs, who fervently looked forward to the implementation of the prophecies about the people of Israel and their imminent conversion. One such was Pierre Jurieu, who published a messianic work in 1686 entitled L'Accomplissement des prophéties. The encounter of the Huguenots and the Jews on Dutch soil bore other fruit as well: at the beginning of the eighteenth century Jacques Basnage published his great work on the history of the Jews, expressing admiration for their perseverance and hope for their conversion once Christians began to treat them with tolerance. 109

Menasseh ben Israel was proud of his connections with Christian scholars, including Gerard Vossius and his son Dionysius, and especially with Caspar Barlaeus. These connections sometimes went beyond the learned discussions Christian scholars had held with erudite rabbis or with learned Jews during the early modern period. Occasionally they also reflected a distinct air of mutual toleration and appreciation of the legitimacy of the interlocutor's religion. An expression of this can be found in the famous Latin epigram penned by Barlaeus in honour of Menasseh ben Israel, which was printed at the beginning of his *De creatione problemata* (1635): 'This is the essence of

¹⁰⁷ E. G. E. van der Wall, 'The Dutch Hebraist Adam Boreel and the Mishnah Project', *LIAS* 16 (1989), 239–63; R. H. Popkin and D. S. Katz, 'The Prefaces of Menasseh ben Israel and Jacob Judah Leon Templo to the Vocalized Mishnah (1640)', in J. van den Berg and E. G. van der Wall (eds.), *Jewish–Christian Relations in the Seventeenth Century: Studies and Documents* (Dordrecht, 1988), 151–3; Y. Kaplan, 'Jews and Judaism in the Hartlib Circle', in I. Zwiep et al. (eds.), *Omnia in Eo: Studies on Jewish Books and Libraries in Honour of Adri Offenberg, Celebrating the 125th Anniversary of the Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana in Amsterdam (= StR 38/39) (Leuven, 2006), 186–215: 197–9.*

¹⁰⁸ E. G. van der Wall, *De mystieke chiliast Petrus Serrarius* (1600–1669) en zijn wereld (Leiden, 1987); id., 'The Amsterdam Millenarian Petrus Serrarius (1600–1669) and the Anglo-Dutch Circle of Philo-Judaists', in van den Berg and van der Wall (eds.), *Jewish–Christian Relations in the Seventeenth Century*, 73–94; id., 'Petrus Serrarius and Menasseh ben Israel: Christian Millenarianism and Jewish Messianism in Seventeenth-Century Amsterdam', in Y. Kaplan, H. Méchoulan, and R. H. Popkin (eds.), *Menasseh ben Israel and his World* (Leiden, 1989), 164–90.

my faith: believe this, Menasseh: I shall be a son of Christ, and you a son of Abraham.' These words imply that friendship can bridge difference of faith, and that no one must expect or hope that a friend whose belief is different from his own will become a convert.¹¹⁰

Opinions such as these certainly did not reflect the general mood, which as we have seen emphasized the need to convert the Jews to the Christian faith. But they are not isolated. They indicate a tolerant approach that already existed in the Dutch Republic before its principles were clearly enunciated. The tolerance found between Jews and Christians permitted friendly relations and cooperation for its own sake, or for the purpose of clarifying common theological concerns, regardless of religious differences. Furthermore, several seventeenth-century Dutch paintings depict Jews in the synagogue and in daily life, with rabbis and simple Jews portrayed as they were observed, without condescension or the hostility enshrined in medieval art, and sometimes even with sympathy for the figures in the paintings.¹¹¹

The many polemical works written by Sephardi Jews during the seventeenth century and first half of the eighteenth century reflect a variety of attitudes towards Christianity: from extreme and general hostility, seeing Christianity as an idolatrous faith, to drawing a distinction between 'idolatrous' Catholicism and Reformed Christianity, which had restored the Bible's 'true' meaning. But the fact that they preferred Reformed Christianity, mainly Calvinism, to Catholicism did not prevent Sephardi writers of apologetics from fiercely disputing the bases of Calvin's doctrine. The subject of predestination and of the reward of the righteous received special attention in their polemical writings. Nevertheless, even the sharpest Jewish critics of the time had a soft spot for the Dutch Calvinists. Thus Isaac Orobio de Castro said of the Dutch Republic: 'May our Lord God sustain these [United Dutch] Provinces and confer upon them a surfeit of divine blessings, so that the purity of their righteousness will ensure that no man is forced to resort to sticks and stones.' These words have a special significance when one recalls that they were not written for publication.

Identification by the Sephardim with the state in which they lived increased during the seventeenth century, and the Ashkenazim followed suit in due course. Although the flattery and praise addressed to the Dutch rulers on every festive occasion do not necessarily reflect sincere inner feelings, it is impossible to ignore the words of Menasseh ben Israel in 1642, in a sermon delivered on the occasion of the visit to the synagogue by Prince Frederick Henry, accompanied by Queen Henrietta Maria of England. This was the first official visit to the synagogue by a member of the House of Orange, and Menasseh ben Israel said at that time: 'We no longer look upon Castile

 $^{^{110}\,}$ F. F. Blok, 'Caspar Barlaeus en de Joden: De geschiedenis van een Epigram', NAKG 58 (1976–7), 85–108, 179–209.

¹¹¹ Gans, Memorbook, 52 ff., 62 ff., 75 ff., 99 ff., 105 ff.; Kaplan, An Alternative Path to Modernity, 29–50.

¹¹² Kaplan, From Christianity to Judaism, 252–62.

and Portugal but upon Holland as our fatherland; we no longer wait upon the Spanish or Portuguese king, but upon their Excellencies the States General and upon Your Highness as our masters, by whose blessed arms we are protected.'113

The participation of members of the Mahamad and other Jewish representatives in public ceremonies and at the funerals of important personages of the Republic became a matter of course. After 1688 the Sephardim and Ashkenazim both took part in the official days of thanksgiving, declared on various occasions by the States General. During that year, on the day following the departure of William III on his crucial voyage to England, a special prayer was said in the Esnoga for the success of the prince and his army. 115

Prayers, songs of praise, and sermons composed in honour of the princes of the House of Orange during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by poets of the Sephardi community reflect the strong bond between this ethnic group—indeed, between all the Jews in the Republic–and the government.¹¹⁶

The Shabatean Movement in Amsterdam

No description of the religious life of the Jews of Amsterdam at this time would be complete without reference to the great messianic revival that gripped all the Jews of the city in 1665 and 1666, when the exciting news arrived from the east of the imminent crowning of Shabetai Tsevi as the messianic king (PLATE 23). The prophetic words of Nathan of Gaza, the founding theologian of the Shabatean movement, set the passions of Jews alight in almost every part of the world. For a short time Shabateanism achieved what no other force had managed to do in Amsterdam: the subordination of all areas of Jewish life to the highest values of religion.

Among the former Conversos the pronouncements of Shabetai Tsevi were greeted with rapture, for the messianic theme played a central role in the popular beliefs and unique theology that had developed among the crypto-Jews in Iberia. Similarly, the great tolerance enjoyed by the Jews of Amsterdam allowed them, more than Jews anywhere else, to give free rein to their enthusiasm. The Ashkenazim, including the masses of refugees from eastern Europe who had settled in Amsterdam after 1648, joined in the raptures of the Sephardim. The highly developed printing industry of the Amsterdam Jews made the city into a world centre for the distribution of Shabatean tikunim (penitential prayers) and prayer-books in Hebrew, as well as in Spanish and Portuguese. Penitence and religious revival became a central motif among the former Conversos, who now found that the time was propitious for repenting of the

Gratulação de Menasseh Ben Israel . . . Ao Celsissimo Principe de Orange Frederique Henrique etc. (Amsterdam, 5402 [1642]).
 Fuks-Mansfeld, De Sefardim, 123, 125.

¹¹⁵ Franco Mendes, Memorias do estabelecimento y progresso dos Judeos portugueses, 89–90.

¹¹⁶ H. den Boer, La literatura sefardí de Amsterdam (Alcalá de Henares, 1995), 62–3.

sins they had committed while feigning adherence to Christianity. The Sephardim set up special confraternities, known as *jesibot*, for prayers and study to encourage repentance, among them Yeshuat Meshiho (The Salvation of His Messiah), which attracted some of the most prominent burghers in the community, and Keter Torah (Crown of Torah), whose members included the principal rabbinic scholars and *ḥakhamim* of the community.¹¹⁷

There was no discernible difference between the rich and the poor, between the elite and the simple folk, in respect of their attitude to Shabateanism, and this was true for both congregations. One of the leading magnates of the Sephardi community, Abraham Israel Pereyra, together with the physician Isaac Naar, left for Italy, with the intention of continuing from there to the Land of Israel in order to greet the messiah. Before leaving, Pereyra published an ethical work in Spanish entitled La Certeza del Camino ('The Certainty of the Path', 1666), the purpose of which was to encourage the members of his community to join the Shabatean movement. 118 However, despite the general messianic fervour, reservations and opposition were voiced within the Sephardi community, especially on the part of some of the prominent wealthy men such as Baron Antonio Lopes Suasso, João Nunes Henriques, Henrique Mendes da Silva, and others like Dr Abraham Gomes de Sousa. 119 On 3 May 1666, when news arrived about the imprisonment of Shabetai Tsevi, a satirical pamphlet in Spanish was circulated in the Amsterdam Bourse condemning the false messiah. The Mahamad of the Sephardi community immediately forbade, on pain of excommunication, the distribution of the pamphlet by 'non-believers', who were roundly condemned. 120

Shabetai Tsevi's conversion to Islam caused the rapid collapse of the Shabatean movement among the Sephardim. The news of the conversion reached Amsterdam towards the end of November 1666. Shortly afterwards the Mahamad of the Sephardi community, with the agreement of Hakham Isaac Aboab da Fonseca, forbade the distribution of the messianic work *Fin de los días* ('End of Days') by Moses Gideon Abudiente, which had been printed in Gluckstadt in that year. ¹²¹ Several months later the Sephardi *parnasim* asked the burgomasters to banish Shabtai Raphael from the city. Raphael, a young Jew from Jerusalem with connections to Shabateanism, claimed he had prophetic abilities and that Elijah the Prophet had come down to him in a cloud. ¹²²

¹¹⁷ G. Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi: The Mystical Messiah* 1626–1676, trans. R. J. Z. Werblowsky (Princeton, 1973), 518–43.

¹¹⁸ H. Méchoulan, *Hispanidad y Judaísmo en tiempos de Espinoza* (edition of Abraham Pereyra, *La Certeza del Camino*) (Salamanca, 1987).

¹¹⁹ C. L. Wilke, 'Le "Messie mystique" et la Bourse d'Amsterdam, le 3 mai 1666', Sefarad, 67/1 (2007), 191–211.

¹²⁰ Kaplan, An Alternative Path to Modernity, 213–17; cf. Swetschinski, Reluctant Cosmopolitans, 229–30.

¹²¹ Kaplan, An Alternative Path to Modernity, 217–21; A. Elqayam, Sabbatean Millenarianism in the Seventeenth Century: A Study of Moshe Abudiente's Fin de los Días [Hamasa lekets hayamin: besorat hage'ulah hashabta'it lameshorer mosheh ben gide'on abudiente] (Los Angeles, 2014) (with English abstract).

¹²² Swetschinski, Reluctant Cosmopolitans, 260.

Most of the Ashkenazim also threw off their faith in Shabetai Tsevi after his conversion, though one finds echoes of Shabateanism among them even after his apostasy. The Yiddish chronicle *Bashraybung fun Shabse Tsvi*, written by the sexton of the Ashkenazi community, Leyb ben Ozer (also known as Levi Asser Rosenkrants, d. 1727), written from 1711 to 1718, shows that there were still Ashkenazim who believed in Shabetai Tsevi in the early eighteenth century. The first part of the manuscript is a Yiddish translation of the medieval anti-Christian chronicle of the life of Jesus *Toledot yeshu hanotsri*. Leyb Ozer based a great deal of his work on Shabetai Tsevi on a Dutch chronicle written by Thomas Coenen, a pastor of the Dutch merchants' Reformed Church in Izmir, at the time of the Shabatean ferment there. Coenen's book was published in Amsterdam in 1669, and, although the edition was small, it appears that some Jews read it. 124

Abraham Pereyra did not continue his journey to the Land of Israel but returned, disillusioned, to Amsterdam. A few years later he expressed his feelings of disappointment in his book *Espejo de la Vanidad del Mundo* ('Mirror of the Vanity of the World', 1671), in which he attributed the failure of Shabateanism to Jewish devotion to games of chance, then very common among the Amsterdam Sephardim. ¹²⁵

Not a few Sephardim in Amsterdam were adepts in kabbalah, one of the leading figures among these being Hakham Isaac Aboab da Fonseca. However, interest in kabbalah was not widespread enough in Amsterdam to be considered the spark that ignited the fire of Shabateanism. Rather, the revival movement was viewed by Amsterdam Sephardim as a means of strengthening Jewish identity, and their messianic faith was fairly conservative, did not challenge the validity of the commandments, and was devoid of antinomian overtones, unlike that of some Sephardi circles in the Ottoman empire. When the hopes placed in Shabetai Tsevi proved groundless, the Sephardim of Amsterdam abandoned their faith in the prophecies of Nathan of Gaza. However, the presence of moderate Shabateans in Amsterdam even later cannot be ignored. The most prominent among them was Rabbi Solomon Ayllion (1664–1718), who was the hakham of the Sephardi community of Amsterdam from 1700 until his death. His Shabatean leanings were probably known, but he never gave outward expression to them.

Significantly, the dispute that broke out in 1713 during the visit of Rabbi Nehemiah Hiya Hayon aroused no Shabatean ferment. The fact that Rabbi Ayllion and the Mahamad defended Hayon, who was a secret Shabatean kabbalist, against the attacks

 $^{^{123}}$ Published by Z. Shazar in a bilingual (Yiddish–Hebrew) edition (Jerusalem, 1978); critical reviews: C. Turniansky, Kiryat Sefer, 54 (1979), 161–6; J. Michman, StR 13/2 (1979), 243–4; L. Fuks, 'Sabatianisme in Amsterdam in het begin van de 18e eeuw: Enkele beschouwingen in Reb Oizers en zijn werk', StR 14/2 (1980), 20–8.

T. Coenen, Ydele verwachtinge der Joden getoont in den person van Sabethai Zevi, haren laetsten vermeynden Mesias (Amsterdam, 1669); Tsipiyot shav shel hayehudim kefi shehitgalu bidmuto shel shabetai tsevi, trans. A. Lagawier and E. Shmueli, introduction and notes by Y. Kaplan (Jerusalem, 1998).

¹²⁵ Kaplan, From Christianity to Judaism, 222.

of the Ashkenazi rabbi Hakham Tsevi and Rabbi Moses Hagiz, both of whom they placed under a ban, does not point to Shabatean leanings among the Sephardi leadership at the time but rather to a desire to retain authority within the Jewish community of Amsterdam. In fact, they ultimately found a way of removing not only the Ashkenazi rabbi and Hagiz but also Hayon himself, whose ideas they rejected completely.¹²⁶

The Intellectual Ferment in Amsterdam's Sephardi Community

The intellectual ferment typifying the Sephardi community in Amsterdam during the seventeenth century was unique and unparalleled in any other early modern Jewish society. The encounter with Judaism aroused friction among some of the New Christians, which sometimes took on extreme form. A few of the more intellectually accomplished of them came into serious ideological conflict with the community leadership and the rabbinical authority.

Uriel da Costa (1584–1640), a New Christian from Porto who converted to Judaism in Amsterdam in 1614, found himself in confrontation with the Sephardi leadership after questioning the validity of the Oral Law. He had studied at the University of Coimbra, and at a certain stage planned an ecclesiastical career. However, after a spiritual crisis he decided to live as a Jew. Following a short stay in Amsterdam, where he was circumcised, he moved to Hamburg and began to examine the differences between the rituals practised in Judaism and the commandments as described in Scripture. This comparison led him to reject what he regarded as the deviations of the Pharisees from the Written Law. Rabbi Leone Modena from Venice examined da Costa's written objections to the Oral Law and composed a detailed answer for the parnasim of the Hamburg community, in which he argued that if da Costa did not retract, he must be excommunicated. Since da Costa refused to alter his positions, he was excommunicated in Hamburg and in the Ponentine community of Venice. When da Costa arrived in Amsterdam in 1623, he brought with him the manuscript of a new book, Exame das Tradições Phariseas ('Examination of the Pharisaic Traditions'), in which he expanded on his reservations regarding rabbinical Judaism in a systematic way, and he also explicitly denied belief in the immortality of the soul, which he considered to be a pharisaic invention. The heads of the three Sephardi congregations knew of the existence of the book, because Samuel da Silva, a physician from Hamburg, published a book in Amsterdam in that year defending the immortality of the soul against da Costa's arguments, as he had read parts of his manuscript. Along with the Sephardi rabbis in

¹²⁶ I. S. Emmanuel, 'Documents Related to the Nehemia Hayon Controversy in Amsterdam' (Heb.), Sefunot, 9 (1965), 211–46; M. Friedman, 'Letters Relating to the Nehemia Hiya Hayon Controversy' (Heb.), Sefunot, 10 (1966), 483–619; E. Carlebach, The Pursuit of Heresy: Rabbi Moses Hagiz and the Sabbatian Controversies (New York, 1990), 75–121.

Amsterdam, the parnasim of the three congregations tried to persuade da Costa to retract, but since he refused, they confirmed the decree of excommunication that had been issued against him in Hamburg. Shortly after da Costa's book was published in 1624, including a response to da Silva's arguments, the Amsterdam civic authorities decided to imprison him, since denial of the immortality of the soul was an offence against the Calvinist church. A few days later he was freed upon payment of a fine, and almost all the copies of his book were confiscated by the Amsterdam authorities and burned. Da Costa moved to Utrecht and lived there for about four years. According to the autobiography he wrote towards the end of his life, he found it difficult to bear the social ostracism. Hence he decided to pretend to retract his heterodox ideas. However, before long it was found that he had reverted to his old ways and did not observe the laws of kashrut. The three Sephardi congregations excommunicated him again, and he remained in excommunication for seven years. During this period he consolidated his deistic doctrine, denying the divine origin of the Law of Moses and arguing that it was a purely human composition. The second excommunication was rescinded after he was once again forced to beg forgiveness. He never recovered from the humiliating ceremony which he described in his autobiography: he was given thirty-nine symbolic lashes and forced to lie on the threshold of the synagogue, and the entire congregation jumped over him. He committed suicide with a pistol shot in his home in Amsterdam in 1640. His autobiographical work written in Latin was apparently found on his desk and was published by Philippus van Limborch in 1687, as an appendix to his work De veritate religionis christianae, the theological debate with Isaac Orobio de Castro. 127

Da Costa's was not an isolated voice, however, and a few years after his suicide the community was in an uproar following another episode, one which has left a deep mark on history: in 1656 Baruch Spinoza (1632–77; PLATE 24) was excommunicated. His parents were Portuguese New Christians who adopted the Jewish religion in Amsterdam. In 1658 the physician Daniel (Juan) de Prado (c.1612–c.1670) was also excommunicated. Prado had arrived in Amsterdam in 1654 after living for a long time as crypto-Jew in Spain. He and Spinoza were both found to be heretics who denied the divine origin of the Bible, divine providence, and the authority of the rabbis and the talmudic tradition. When Spinoza began to make his heretical opinions public, he also found himself in conflict with his community on another level. In 1654 his father Michael d'Espinosa died, and Baruch was placed at the head of the family business, which

¹²⁷ U. da Costa, *Examination of Pharisaic Traditions*, supplemented by Semuel da Silva's *Treatise on the Immortality of the Soul*, translation, notes, and introduction by H. P. Salomon and I. S. Sassoon (Leiden, 1993); I. S. Révah, *Des Marranes à Spinoza*, ed. H. Méchoulan, P.-F. Moreau, and C. Wilke (Paris, 1995), 77–168.

¹²⁸ I. S. Révah, *Spinoza et le Dr. Juan de Prado* (Paris, 1959); id., 'Aux origines de la rupture spinozienne: Nouveaux documents sur l'incroyance dans la communauté judéo-portugaise à Amsterdam à l'époque de l'excommunication de Spinoza', *Revue des études juives*, 123 (1964), 359–431; S. Nadler, *Spinoza: A Life* (Cambridge, 1999), 116–54; N. Muchnik, *Une vie marrane: Les Pérégrinations de Juan de Prado dans l'Europe du XVIIe siècle* (Paris, 2005).

specialized in the import of oil, figs, almonds, wine, and fruit from Portugal not only to Holland but also to northern France, and later to Morocco and the Canary Islands. The war with England struck a severe blow to the family business, as the English captured ships which bore merchandise belonging to it. To avoid payment of his debts, he exploited the Dutch law that permitted him, being an orphan under the age of 25, to name a guardian who would take his financial liquidation upon himself. This step was absolutely contrary to the conventions accepted in the Sephardi community and exacerbated his confrontation with the *parnasim* of that community. 129

It seems likely that, by the time he clashed with the leaders of the Sephardi community, Spinoza had already elaborated some of his criticism of Judaism and of the idea that the Jews were the chosen people, which he expressed in the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* (1670). It is also possible that some of the ideas in the *Tractatus* had been set down previously in a work he wrote in his own defence when he was expelled from the congregation, but this manuscript has not survived. ¹³⁰ Spinoza found common ground with a group of Dutch Collegiants, Christian intellectuals who had broken with the confessional church. But despite his own break with Judaism and his closeness to Christian circles, Spinoza saw no reason to convert to Christianity and remained outside any church until the end of his life. ¹³¹ He laid the foundations for radical enlightenment and biblical criticism, according to historical and philological criteria, and central figures in modern Judaism drew inspiration from his philosophy.

The physician Isaac Orobio de Castro, who had studied in Spain with Prado at the University of Alcalá de Henares, reached Amsterdam in 1662 and returned openly to Judaism. He became the tireless and uncompromising defender of the Jewish tradition against the attacks of de Prado and Spinoza. Using neo-scholastic concepts and fideistic arguments, he sought to prove that only faith in the Law of Moses and the observance of its commandments could ensure salvation of the soul. 132

During the first half of the eighteenth century subversive voices were heard increasingly within the Sephardi community of Amsterdam, challenging talmudic Judaism and rabbinical authority. In 1712 the community excommunicated three individuals for adhering to 'the Karaite sect'. All the evidence indicates that they were not followers of traditional Karaism, as practised in the Middle East and Lithuania at that

¹²⁹ J. Israel, 'Philosophy, Commerce and the Synagogue: Spinoza's Expulsion from the Amsterdam Portuguese Jewish Community in 1656', in Israel and Salverda (eds.), *Dutch Jewry: Its History and Secular Culture*, 125–39; cf. O. Vlessing, 'The Excommunication of Baruch Spinoza: A Struggle between Jewish and Civil Law', ibid. 141–72.

¹³⁰ Y. Y. Melamed and M. A. Rosenthal (eds.), *Spinoza's Theological-Political Treatise: A Critical Guide* (Cambridge, 2010).

¹³¹ Nadler, Spinoza, 139–41, 167–70; J. I. Israel, Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity 1650–1750 (Oxford, 2001), 187–9, 203–5, 342–58, 388–9.

¹³² Y. Kaplan, From Christianity to Judaism: The Story of Isaac Orobio de Castro, trans. R. Loewe (Oxford, 1989), 110–78, 263–70.

time, but they were apparently exposed to Karaite texts, which were available in western Europe. They might have made an idealized abstraction of the Karaite phenomenon for themselves, based on the writings of Richard Simon, who in his Histoire critique du Vieux Testament called them 'Juifs épurez'. 133 In any event, in various works written within the western Sephardi diaspora at that time, warnings against Karaism 'in our localities' were sounded. Thus, for example, in a work written in Spanish in Amsterdam between 1708 and 1737 by a Sephardi Jew named Joseph López (c.1667–1747) Karaism is mentioned as one of the six enemies threatening contemporary Judaism. This work, entitled El Mantenedor ('The Defender'), has been preserved in a single manuscript that extends over three thick volumes in the author's handwriting. The work is entirely based on appropriations from Christian and Jewish writings, without any indication of the sources. It is built on dialogues, which the Jew holds with his enemies, which include, aside from the topic of Karaism, atheism, which denies the existence of God; Epicureanism, which denies the immortality of the soul; deism, which denies divine providence; and, along with these, Calvinism, which attracts assimilated Jews; as well as the Catholic religion, in which the New Christians remaining in Spain and Portugal are enmired. 134

Without doubt deistic beliefs, on the one hand, and Spinozan doctrines, on the other, penetrated the consciousness of more than a few Sephardi intellectuals who were exposed to radical enlightenment and kept a variety of subversive books in their libraries. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, Rabbi Moshe Hagiz, the emissary from the Land of Israel who had lived in Amsterdam for several years, already warned about the way of life of the Sephardi social elite and the beliefs they held: 'since they live in lands where there is liberty combined with wealth, preserved for their undoing; they cast the yoke of the rabbis from their necks . . . Some of those I saw in that diaspora . . . began by doubting the teachings of the sages and ended by denying the Rock who dwells on high.' ¹³⁵

The Sephardi philosopher Isaac de Pinto (1717–87), who was born in Amsterdam, served as secretary of a literary academy whose members were young Sephardim with an interest in philosophy and science. In two lectures that he gave in the early 1740s, he clearly sought to refute the philosophy of Spinoza and the deism of John Toland, one of the leading English Deists (1670–1722), although a few years afterwards he himself became a thoroughgoing Deist. ¹³⁶ The writings of Jean-Baptiste de Boyer, marquis

¹³³ Kaplan, *An Alternative Path to Modernity*, 234–79; cf. M. Rustow, 'Karaites Real and Imagined: Three Cases of Jewish Heresy', *Past and Present*, 197 (2007), 35–74; J. W. Wesselius, 'Spinoza's Excommunication and Related Matters', *StR* 24 (1990), 50–63; S. Rosenberg, 'Emunat Hakhamim', in I. Twersky and B. Septimus (eds.), *Jewish Thought in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge, Mass., 1987), 285–341.

¹³⁴ B. Bar-Lavi, *'El Mantenedor* by Joseph López: Heterodoxy, Appropriation and Erudition in the Early 18th Century Western Sephardi Diaspora' (MA thesis, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2015).

¹³⁵ M. Hagiz, Sefer sefat emet (Amsterdam, 5467 [1707]), fo. 4b; Carlebach, The Pursuit of Heresy.

¹³⁶ I. J. A. Nijenhuis, *Een Joodse Philosophe: Isaac de Pinto (1717–1787)* (Amsterdam, 1992), 8–11.

d'Argens, who lived in the Dutch Republic from 1734 to 1740, relate that he met Sephardi Jews with deistic and Spinozan convictions in Amsterdam and The Hague. 137

Jewish Printers in Amsterdam

During the seventeenth century and a considerable part of the eighteenth century, the Dutch Republic was regarded as Europe's publishing house. The networks of commerce and communications that Holland had woven contributed to this, as well as the quality of printing and the paper that was available there, and the tolerant regime made it possible to publish works which were forbidden elsewhere. From the 1640s onwards Amsterdam became the leading centre for the printing of Jewish books. The prestige of the Amsterdam printing industry, in Hebrew and Yiddish, made the Hebrew fonts of the city famous, and in many books that were not printed in Amsterdam, it was stated that they were printed with 'Amsterdam letters', to indicate the choice quality of the product. ¹³⁸

Between 1644 and 1750, along with a variety of Hebrew books that were published in Amsterdam at that time, more than 220 Yiddish books were printed. While some of these were re-editions of books that had been printed elsewhere, many of them were printed in Amsterdam for the first time. ¹³⁹ Similarly, between 1584 and 1825, 534 Jewish books in Spanish and Portuguese were published. In addition, another 282 works in those languages were printed; although their content was not Jewish, they were edited, published, or financed by Dutch Sephardi Jews. ¹⁴⁰ The great freedom Jews enjoyed in Amsterdam allowed them to publish more or less what they liked, and the general expansion of the Dutch printing industry encouraged Jewish entrepreneurs to establish themselves in this area and to print books intended for the world Jewish market.

The first Jewish printer in Amsterdam was Hakham Menasseh ben Israel, who used this occupation to supplement his meagre salary as preacher and rabbi. On 1 January 1627 the first book from his printing shop was published—Hebrew prayers according to the Sephardi rite. Although this printing house passed into the hands of Eliau Aboab for a certain period, it was later managed by turns by Menasseh ben Israel's two sons, Joseph and Samuel, and it remained connected to him until he went on his mission to London in 1655, to renew Jewish settlement in England. Nearly fifty Hebrew books were published by his printing house and another twenty-three in other languages, including his own works in Spanish and Latin, and his English address to Oliver Crom-

¹³⁷ J. Israel, 'Philosophy, Deism, and the Early Jewish Enlightenment (1655–1740)', in Kaplan (ed.), *The Dutch Intersection*, 173–201.

¹³⁸ I. H. van Eeghen, *De Amsterdamse boekhandel 1680–1725* (Amsterdam, 1978); C. Berkvens-Stevelinck, H. Bots, P. G. Hoftijzer, and O. S. Lankhorst (eds.), *Le Magazin de l'univers: The Dutch Republic as the Center of the European Book Trade* (Leiden, 1990).

¹³⁹ Turniansky, 'On Didactic Literature in Yiddish in Amsterdam', 163.

¹⁴⁰ Den Boer, 'Amsterdam as "Locus" of Iberian Printing', 93.

well in 1651. In 1634 he went to the important book fair in Frankfurt, and on that occasion he made contact with Jewish booksellers from eastern Europe and began to collaborate with them. A year later he began to work with the Dutch printer and publisher Johannes Jansonius, who financed the printing of a number of Bibles, books of Psalms, and a book of customs for the Jewish market in eastern Europe.¹⁴¹

Imanoel Benveniste's arrival in Amsterdam from Venice in 1639 marks the transfer of the primacy in Hebrew printing from Italy to the capital of the Dutch Republic. Benveniste's printing house was active from 1640 to 1664, producing nearly fifty Hebrew books and another six in Spanish. The years of his activity as a printer coincided with the great immigration of Jews from Poland, who supplied experienced Hebrew compositors for the book industry with extensive knowledge of Jewish sources. Between 1644 and 1648 he printed the famous Amsterdam edition of the Babylonian Talmud, which was outstanding both in its beauty and in its presentation of a full and uncensored text. In 1645 Uri Phoebus Halevi, the grandson of Moshe Uri Halevi, who had been the rabbi of the first Sephardim in the city, began to work for him as a compositor. His work for Benveniste enabled him to become, later on, an important printer in his own right. In 1648 Benveniste's Sephardi printing shop brought out the first Amsterdam edition of *Tsene rene* ('Go Out and See', a phrase from the Song of Songs). The book was written by Jacob ben Isaac Ashkenazi of Janów, Poland, in the 1590s and became a favourite devotional text for women in the Ashkenazi diaspora. 143

In 1658 Uri Phoebus Halevi established a printing shop that was active until 1689. 144 Within a short time he became the leading Hebrew publisher, and in 1664 he was accepted into the Amsterdam Guild of Booksellers, Book Printers, and Bookbinders. This guild, like those of the brokers, physicians, apothecaries, and surgeons, never denied entry to Jews. In 1673 he was accepted as a member of the Sephardi community despite his Ashkenazi origins, by virtue of his grandfather's activity. For three years he devoted himself entirely to his main project as a printer: the publication of a Yiddish translation of the Bible, which came out in 1679. This translation was primarily meant for the Jews of Poland, who were the largest community of Yiddish readers at that time. The book was translated by Jekutiel Blitz, and Uri Phoebus enlisted Christian partners and investors to finance the printing of 6,300 copies. In the introduction Uri Phoebus wrote that his purpose was to help the Ashkenazi Jews to become well versed in the Bible, like their Sephardi brethren. A great conflict arose between Uri Phoebus and the important printer Joseph Athias surrounding the printing of this translation. Athias began to publish books in the same year that Uri Phoebus founded his printing shop, and at first he joined in the project of the Yiddish Bible with his colleague. But in early 1676 the collaboration fell apart, and Athias decided to publish a competing Yiddish

¹⁴¹ Fuks-Mansfeld, De Sefardim, 89–90; Fuks and Fuks-Mansfeld, Hebrew Typography in the Northern Netherlands, i. 99–135.

¹⁴² Ibid. 146–84.

¹⁴³ Berger, Producing Redemption in Amsterdam, 199–204.

¹⁴⁴ Fuks and Fuks-Mansfeld, Hebrew Typography in the Northern Netherlands, ii. 233–86.

translation of the Bible, made by Joseph Witzenhausen. The conflict between the two printers was bitter and prolonged, and the Dutch investors in the two translations were also involved. ¹⁴⁵ In his final years of activity as a printer, Uri Phoebus's production was modest but significant. In 1690 he moved to Poland with his family, to the city of Zolkiew. He continued to publish books until his return to Amsterdam in 1705, where he died in 1715.

One of his contemporaries, David de Castro Tartas, printed books in Hebrew, Spanish, and Portuguese between 1662 and 1698. He began his career as an apprentice in Menasseh ben Israel's printing house, and during most of the years of his activity he mainly supplied the needs of the Sephardi community of Amsterdam. He also printed some of the Spanish books by writers and poets of the Sephardi community, such as Daniel Levi de Barrios and Joseph Penso de la Vega. In 1669 he began to develop connections with Ashkenazi investors and to publish for the international Jewish book market. In 1675 he published a splendid book for the inauguration of the Portuguese synagogue, containing the Portuguese sermons that were given during the celebrations. To promote sales of the book Castro Tartas included four pages of etchings by the well-known artist Romeyn de Hooghe (or by one of his students), which depicted the new synagogue building, from the outside and the interior (PLATES 25 and 26). 147 He also published the Spanish newspaper Gazeta de Amsterdam, which apparently began to appear in 1672 and lasted until 1702. It is regarded as the first Jewish newspaper, though in fact it contained no actual Jewish content, but rather political and economic news that was intended to supply relevant information for the merchants of the nação. 148 Beginning in the 1680s he became the main printer of Hebrew books in Amsterdam.

Joseph Athias was without doubt the most active and successful Jewish printer in Amsterdam during the seventeenth century. He began to print in 1658 and decided to specialize in the publication of Hebrew Bibles for Protestant scholars, professors at the university. In 1661, at the age of 26, he published a Hebrew Bible with an introduction in Latin by Johannes Leusden, professor of Hebrew at the University of

¹⁴⁵ M. Aptroot, 'Bible Translation as Cultural Reform: The Amsterdam Yiddish Bibles (1678–1679)' (D.Phil. thesis, Oxford University, 1989); id., ''In galkhes they do not say so, but the taytsh is as it stands here": Notes on the Amsterdam Yiddish Bible Translations by Blitz and Witzenhausen', *StR* 27 (1993), 136–58; id., 'Yiddish Bibles in Amsterdam', in S. Berger (ed.), *The Bible in/and Yiddish* (Amsterdam, 2007), 42–60.

¹⁴⁶ Fuks and Fuks-Mansfeld, Hebrew Typography in the Northern Netherlands, ii. 339–82.

¹⁴⁷ Fuks and Fuks-Mansfeld, 'The Inauguration of the Portuguese Synagogue of Amsterdam'; A. K. Offenberg, 'De wijze stad aan de Amstel: De joodse prenten', in H. van Nierop et al. (eds.), *Romeyn de Hooghe: De verbeelding van de late Gouden Eeuw* (Zwolle, 2008), 112–25: 115.

¹⁴⁸ C. P. Burger, Jr., 'De Gazeta de Amsterdam', *Het Boek*, 12 (1923), 57–74; *Nieuw Israelietisch Weekblad*, 111/2 (1975), issue dedicated to the *Gazeta*; H. Hogendoorn, 'Amsterdamse krant in het Spaans en Italiaans: 17e eeuws niewsblad voor Spaanse en Portugese joden', *Ons Amsterdam*, 29 (1977), 233–7.

¹⁴⁹ Fuks and Fuks-Mansfeld, Hebrew Typography in the Northern Netherlands, ii. 286–339.

Utrecht. ¹⁵⁰ The edition was an impressive commercial success, and in that year he began to print English Bibles in significant quantities. He was the first Jew to be accepted into the Amsterdam Book Printers Guild. Athias made use of a new invention, the stereotype (a printing plate cast from a mould), which enabled him to print large editions in a short time: He printed tens of thousands of English Bibles along with Hebrew books, but only as a side venture, financed by Jewish merchants.

In 1665 Athias learned that his father had been burned at the stake in an auto-da-fé in Córdoba, Spain, and in two Ashkenazi prayer-books, which he published in 1667 and 1668, he wrote his name on the title page as 'Joseph, the son of the martyr Abraham Athias'. ¹⁵¹

In 1667 a new edition of the Hebrew Bible was published with a short commentary in Latin by Leusden on the text from the book of Joshua on, printed in the margins of every page. Leusden also added a long introduction. Carrying approbation from both Jewish and Christian religious authorities, it testified to the degree to which Jews and Christians could collaborate in that era in Amsterdam. The edition comprised 5,000 copies. Athias dedicated it to the States General of the Dutch Republic and sent them a copy in a special binding. The States decided to reward him with a gold medallion.

In 1695 Athias went bankrupt and was forced to go into hiding, along with his son Emanuel, to avoid the creditors who pursued him. When he managed to recover, he undertook a number of expensive editions of important Hebrew books: *Shenei luḥot haberit* by Isaiah Horowitz, which was published in 1698, in a splendid folio edition of 2,100 copies, and in the same year he printed 4,000 copies of the *Shulḥan arukh* in four volumes. ¹⁵³ In 1699 he began to plan a folio edition of the *Mishneh torah* by Maimonides, which was published in 1702–3 in four folio volumes, after his death in 1700. ¹⁵⁴ His son Emanuel continued his father's business for a number of years until he was forced to retire and sell all of his printing material in a public auction in 1711.

Moses Mendes Coitinho began to print books in 1699, and by 1711, when he was forced to go out of the printing business for financial reasons, he had printed thirty-five titles in Hebrew. He should be seen as the one who closed the era of important Sephardi printers of the seventeenth century, those who not only printed prayer-books and religious works, but who also initiated the publication of interesting and innovative works. ¹⁵⁵ The non-Jewish printer Caspar Steen should also be mentioned. He printed books in Hebrew and Yiddish in 1692–1703, with the assistance of his son Anthony, and there is evidence that both of them took part in the actual work of composing Hebrew texts. ¹⁵⁶ Steen also employed Jewish compositors, however, including Hayyim Druker,

¹⁵⁰ L. Hirschel, 'Johannes Leusden als hebraist', *StR* I (1967), 23–50, ed., with new footnotes, by A. K. Offenberg.

¹⁵¹ Fuks and Fuks-Mansfeld, *Hebrew Typography in the Northern Netherlands*, ii. 316–18.

Theodor Dunkelgrün, "Never Printed Like This Before": Johannes Leusden, Joseph Athias and the Hebrew Bible (1659–1667) (Amsterdam, 2014), 12.

153 Ibid. 322–4.

154 Ibid. 331–3.

155 Ibid. 424–41.

¹⁵⁶ I. H. van Eeghen, 'Caspar Pietersen Steen, een drukker van Hebreeuwse boeken in Amsterdam (1692–1703)', StR I (1967), 51–65; Fuks and Fuks-Mansfeld, Hebrew Typography in the Northern Netherlands, ii. 411–24.

one of the most important Jewish printers active in Amsterdam.¹⁵⁷ A very significant work published by Steen was *Sefer hamagid*, a Yiddish paraphrase of sections of the Prophets and of the Writings by Jacob ben Isaac Ashkenazi, published in four volumes in 1699.¹⁵⁸

Moses Kosman, the son of the wealthy merchant Eliah Gimpel, who was a military supplier to the States General of the Dutch Republic, managed to print two books during the two years when he was active as a printer in Amsterdam before he sold his printing house, with all its contents, to the proselyte Moshe ben Avraham Avinu, who had worked earlier as a Hebrew compositor for Uri Phoebus. Kosman's printing house passed through the hands of several owners before it closed in 1713. Two partners who owned it at one time were Asher Anshel ben Eliezer and Issachar Ber ben Eliezer. In 1695 they printed a splendid Passover *Haggadah*, which served as a model for countless *Haggadot* during the eighteenth century. It was designed for both Ashkenazim and Sephardim, and the instructions for holding a Passover *seder* were written in both Yiddish and Spanish (Plate 27). The illustrations in the *Haggadah* were not crude woodcuts but rather copperplate engravings, the first time this technique was used by a Jewish printer. The illustrator was Abraham bar Jacob Avinu, a proselyte, and he apparently copied the pictures from a Protestant Bible printed in Basle. 160

In the same period Solomon Proops entered the picture, financing some of the books printed in that house. In 1704 he established a printing house of his own, and by 1734 he had printed 230 books. It may be said that he, followed by his three sons, made Jewish printing in Amsterdam world-famous. ¹⁶¹ In 1713 and 1715, together with Hayyim Druker, he published a two-volume High Holiday prayer-book in Hebrew and Yiddish. ¹⁶² Among his important innovations should be mentioned the publication of an edition of the best-seller *Tsene rene* in 1722, not in the ordinary folio format but in octavo, to make the book more popular and accessible. ¹⁶³ In 1730 he printed the first catalogue of Hebrew books for sale, entitled *Apiryon shelomoh* ('The Canopy of Solomon'). ¹⁶⁴ In 1714 he began to print an edition of the Talmud but was forced to stop because of the monopoly that had been given by rabbinical decree to the competing printers Samuel Marches and Raphael Palacios. His three sons, by contrast, published a complete edition of the Talmud between 1752 and 1765. ¹⁶⁵

¹⁵⁷ S. Berger, 'Hayyim Druker: Corrector, Editor and Publisher' (Heb.), in I. Bartal et al. (eds.), *Hut shel hen: A Jubilee Book in Honour of Chava Turniansky* (Jerusalem, 2012), 157–80.

¹⁵⁸ Fuks and Fuks-Mansfeld, *Hebrew Typography in the Northern Netherlands*, ii. 420–2.

 $^{^{159}\ \ \}text{Ibid.}\ 382-411;\ \text{I.\ H.\ van\ Eeghen,\ 'Moses\ Abrahamsz.}\ Boekdrukker\ te\ Amsterdam',\ StR\ 6\ (1972),\ 58-70.$

¹⁶⁰ S. Sabar, 'From Amsterdam to Bombay, Baghdad, and Casablanca: The Influence of the Amsterdam Haggadah on Haggadah Illustration among the Jews in India and the Lands of Islam', in Kaplan (ed.), *The Dutch Intersection*, 279–99.

¹⁶¹ Hirschel, 'Cultuur en Volksleven', 472.
¹⁶² Berger, Producing Redemption in Amsterdam, 45.

¹⁶³ Ibid. 148. ¹⁶⁴ M. J. Heller, Studies in the Making of the Early Hebrew Book (Leiden, 2008), 246.

¹⁶⁵ Hirschel, 'Cultuur en Volksleven', 472–3.

In the eighteenth century, primacy in the printing of Hebrew books in Amsterdam passed into the hands of Ashkenazi printers, among the most important of whom was Hayyim Druker, a printer-scholar, who became active in the Amsterdam book market at the end of the seventeenth century. He made a most important contribution to the development of printing in Yiddish, adapting printed Yiddish to the living, spoken language, because he found that the popular works in Yiddish were written in an archaic idiom. In an edition of the popular ethical work *Sefer lev tov* ('Book of the Good Heart') by Isaac ben Eliakim of Posen, which he published in 1706, he permitted himself to make significant linguistic changes, even writing a new section, entitled *Lev hakhamim* ('Heart of the Wise'), and adding it to the body of the work. ¹⁶⁶

Moshe Frankfurt was born in Amsterdam in 1672 and spent most of his ninety years there. He served as a rabbinical judge of the Ashkenazi community of Amsterdam and his involvement in the publication of Hebrew and Yiddish books was multifaceted. In addition to printing thirty books between 1721 and 1730 and another fifteen in the following years, he was also involved in the publication of books printed by other printers. The most important project in which he took enthusiastic part was the printing of the *Biblia rabbinica magna*, which was called *Kehilot mosheh* ('The Compilations of Moses') in Hebrew, published in 1724–7. This was a fine edition of all the books of the Bible, in four volumes, accompanied by the largest collection of Jewish commentaries printed hitherto. He employed the subscription system to cope with the many expenses involved in printing books. To print *Magishei minḥah* ('Those Who Bring an Offering'), published in 1725, he succeeded in enlisting subscribers, to whom he sent the pages of the book immediately after they were printed, week by week, before the entire book was printed.¹⁶⁷

Herts Levi Roffe was one of the most productive Hebrew printers in Amsterdam in the eighteenth century. He was known by his Dutch name, Hartog Alexander van Emden. He adopted his family name Roffe, which means physician, as that was his profession, having received the degree from the University of Harderwijk in 1716, at the age of 21. He belonged to one of the wealthier Ashkenazi families of Amsterdam, and, along with his medical practice, he began selling books. By 1726 he had already established a printing house and become an independent publisher. He first published prayer-books according to the Sephardi rite, expecting demand from the Sephardi community, but within a short time he began to print mainly for an Ashkenazi readership. In 1738 a fire broke out in Roffe's home and also reached his printing shop and bookstore, which were in his house. After the fire thieves broke in and stole some of his property. The municipal authorities intervened and it turned out that the thieves were Jews. Roffe overcame these setbacks, and in 1741 he was joined by his son-in-law Kosman

¹⁶⁶ Berger, Producing Redemption in Amsterdam, 53–4.

¹⁶⁷ A. Bar-Levay, 'Amsterdam and the Inception of the Jewish Republic of Letters', in Kaplan (ed.), *The Dutch Intersection*, 225–37; Berger, *Producing Redemption in Amsterdam*, 99–100, 106–7, 149, 166.

as a partner in printing and selling books. Kosman became the official owner of the business in 1762, when he bought it from Roffe. About two-thirds of the books that he printed were intended for both Ashkenazim and Sephardim, such as the fine first edition of the well-known ethical work *Mesilat yesharim* ('The Path of the Just') by Moses Hayyim Luzzatto, published in 1740. ¹⁶⁸ Three important authors whose works he published in the 1740s had worked for him as compositors or proofreaders: Shlomo Zalman London, whose work in Hebrew and Yiddish, *Kohelet shelomoh*, was published in 1744, ¹⁶⁹ and the brothers-in-law Menahem Man Amelander and Eleasar Soesman Rudelsum. ¹⁷⁰

The Cultural Creativity of the Dutch Sephardim

The better educated among the New Christians who settled in Holland during the seventeenth century brought with them knowledge and linguistic skills that helped them to make their way in the European intellectual world. The transition to Judaism did not obscure the Iberian identity of this community, which not only went on speaking Spanish and Portuguese but continued to promote reading and writing in those languages, thus retaining links with Hispanic and Lusitanian culture. Although the Spanish and Portuguese that they spoke during the seventeenth century were not fundamentally different from the languages spoken in Spain and Portugal at the time, in the texts that they wrote it is possible to discern that their Spanish and Portuguese had undergone a process of lexical and syntactical cross-fertilization: Portuguese elements penetrated their Spanish, and Spanish elements penetrated their Portuguese, and Hebrew, Dutch, and French words found their way into both languages. ¹⁷¹ Spanish, because of its wide use in the Sephardi Jewish world and its prominent international status, became the main language of intellectual and literary creativity. Portuguese, by contrast, became the main spoken language, the language of the community registers, the public announcements in the synagogue, and generally also the language of the sermons preached by the rabbis.

Although the Sephardim absorbed the Dutch language, and those born in the Republic knew it well, they did not use it widely as a written language and rarely translated works into Dutch. They read Dutch with no difficulty, especially after the end of the seventeenth century, but in the eighteenth century they wrote in French more often than in Dutch. This is because French became the international language of

¹⁶⁸ S. Dotan-Ofir, 'History, Books, and Society: Yiddish Didactic Books Printed in Early Modern Amsterdam' [Hasefarim hadidaktiyim shenidpesu beyidish be'amsterdam ba'et haḥadashah hamukdemet: historyah hevratit vetarbutit] (Ph.D. thesis, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2010), 223–34; Berger, *Producing Redemption in Amsterdam*, 112–13, 130, 149, 158, 187, 204.
¹⁶⁹ Dotan-Ofir, 'History, Books, and Society', 234–45.

¹⁷⁰ On their activities as publishers see below, on 'The Emergence of an Ashkenazi Local Culture'.

¹⁷¹ B. N. Teensma, 'Sefardim en portugese taalkunde in Nederland', *StR* 19/2 (1985), 39–78; id., 'The Suffocation of Spanish and Portuguese among the Amsterdam Sephardi Jews', *DJH* iii. 137–77.

scholarship and high culture during the second half of the seventeenth century, inheriting the status held by Latin for centuries. French also became more important in Holland towards the end of the seventeenth century with increased immigration of Huguenots after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. Only towards the end of the eighteenth century do we find signs of a transition to Dutch as the main written language.

The Sephardi Jews of Amsterdam in the early modern period produced extensive literary work in Hebrew, Spanish, and Portuguese. Aside from the Jews of Italy, the Sephardi community of Amsterdam was the most productive centre in the field of Hebrew poetry. The attention given to the study of Hebrew in the school of the Amsterdam Sephardi community bore fruit, making it possible for talented pupils to write prose and verse in that language and to use it for rabbinic treatises. Several dozen members of the community tried their hand at Hebrew poetry in one form or another. Some of this poetry was religious, but a considerable portion of it was secular: poems of praise and commemoration, occasional poems, riddles, and the like. Sephardi Hebrew poetry was influenced, in both form and content, by Iberian and Italian literature. It is strophic verse, with traces of Italian Hebrew Renaissance and Baroque poetry. 172

Rabbi Isaac Uziel of Fez, who arrived in Amsterdam in the early seventeenth century, was, among other things, a prolific poet, the first to write Hebrew sonnets in Holland. ¹⁷³ Moses Zacuto (*c*.1610–97) lived most of his adult life in Italy, but he was born in Amsterdam and received most of his education there. In his youth he began to write the poetic drama Yesod olam ('Eternal Foundation') about the life of the patriarch Abraham, influenced by Spanish comedy, but he never completed it, for it stops in the middle of the forty-third sonnet. 174 Daniel Belillos (d. c.1697), who taught in the Ets Haim yeshiva, wrote poems and poetical compositions such as Toledot adam ('The History of Adam'), which describes the creation of the world and the life of Adam, and Kerem hemed ('Precious Vineyard'), which contains fifty-two eight-line stanzas. ¹⁷⁵ Joseph Penso de la Vega (1650-93), who arrived from Spain as a child and came from a wealthy family of merchants, wrote at the age of 17 an allegorical poetic drama in Hebrew, a kind of Jewish auto sacramental. It was printed in 1673 under the title Asirei hatikvah ('The Prisoners of Hope'). 176 Hakham Solomon de Oliveyra (1635–1708), who was born in Lisbon and educated in Amsterdam, and became the chief rabbi of the community after the death of Jacob Sasportas, wrote many poems, some of which were included in

¹⁷² A. van der Heide, 'Dutch Hebrew Poetry of the 17th Century', DJH ii. 137–52.

¹⁷³ D. Bregman, *A Bundle of Gold: Hebrew Sonnets from the Renaissance and the Baroque* [Sharsheret hazahav: hasonet ha'ivri ledorotav] (Jerusalem, 1997), 126–8.

¹⁷⁴ J. Melkman, 'Moshe Zacuto's Play Yesod olam', StR 1 (1967), 1–28; Bregman, A Bundle of Gold, 242–304.

¹⁷⁵ Bregman, A Bundle of Gold, 366-70, 379-81.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid. 451–4; D. Pagis, A Secret Sealed: Hebrew Baroque Emblem-Riddles from Italy and Holland [Al sod ḥatum: letoledot haḥidah ha'ivrit be'italyah uveholand] (Jerusalem, 1986), v. index.

two collections published in 1665: Ayelet ahavim ('Beloved Doe'), on Hebrew poetry, and Sharshot gavlut ('The Roots of Braiding'), which is a lexicon and handbook of Hebrew rhyme. He dedicated some of his poems to Shabetai Tsevi at that time.¹⁷⁷ Rabbi Moses Hayyim Luzzatto (1707–46) was the most prominent Hebrew poet in the first half of the eighteenth century. Born in Padua, he was a prominent kabbalist, but the leading rabbinical authorities in Italy were highly suspicious about the content of his mystical writings and threatened to excommunicate him. He lived in Amsterdam from 1735 to 1743 and there he wrote his allegorical drama Layesharim tehilah ('Praise of the Righteous').

However, most of the poetic creativity of the Sephardi Jews in Amsterdam was in Spanish. The Baroque literature of Spain served as a model for the Sephardi poets, and they wrote in the style of *conceptismo* and *culteranismo*, the two dominant literary trends in the Iberian peninsula. ¹⁷⁸ One of the first lyric poets, who composed a rhymed Spanish translation of the Book of Psalms, was David Abenatar Melo (1569–1632). He was born in Portugal, was arrested and tortured by the Lusitanian Inquisition, but managed to reach Amsterdam in 1613 and join the Jewish community. In 1626 his *Los CL Salmos de David* was printed in Hamburg, which is where he spent the last years of his life. However, the ten years that he lived in Amsterdam formed him as a sensitive and subtle poet in the Spanish language. ¹⁷⁹

Among about fifty Sephardi Jewish writers whose works are known to us in some way, a number of fairly talented and productive poets stand out. One of the most successful poets, who wrote in both Spanish and Portuguese, was Manuel (Jacob) de Pina. His work *Chanças del ingenio y dislates de la musa*, published in 1656, includes poems in both languages, satirical in character and some even pornographic. ¹⁸⁰ Its publication caused a scandal in the Sephardi community, and the Mahamad decided not only to forbid its circulation but also to confiscate and burn every copy of it, and it even threatened to impose excommunication on anyone possessing copies of it. However, surprisingly, in 1665 the Mahamad permitted distribution of the book, apparently after the intervention of Jerónimo Nunes da Costa (alias Moseh Curiel) who was one of

¹⁷⁷ J. A. Brombacher, 'Handen vol olijven: De poëzie van Selomoh d'Oliveyra, rabbijn en leraar van de Portugese natie in de 17de eeuw te Amsterdam' (doctoral dissertation, University of Leiden, 1990); A. van der Heide, 'Selomoh de Oliveyra: Ayelet Ahavim. Een 17-de eeuwse bewerking van het verhaal van Abrahams offer', in L. Dasberg and J. N. Cohen (eds.), Neveh Ja'aqov: Jubilee Volume Presented to Dr. Jaap Meijer on the Occasion of his 70th Birthday (Assen, 1982), 207–40; id., 'Poetry in the Margin: The Literary Career of Haham Selomoh d'Oliveyra (1633–1708)', in S. Berger and I. E. Zwiep (eds.), Epigonism and the Dynamic of Jewish Culture (Leuven, 2008) [StR 40 (2007/8)], 139–46.

¹⁷⁹ H. P. Salomon, Portrait of a New Christian: Fernão Álvares Melo (1569–1632) (Paris, 1982); Den Boer, La literatura sefardí de Amsterdam, 273–75.

¹⁸⁰ Den Boer, *La literatura sefardí de Amsterdam*, 44–5, 280–4; Salomon, 'Saul Levi Mortera en zijn "Traktaat", p. cii; J. Huerta Calvo, 'Manuel de Pina y la literatura burlesca de los sefardíes', in F. Díaz Esteban (ed.), *Los judaizantes en Europa y la literatura castellana del siglo de oro* (Madrid, 1994), 215–28.

the *parnasim* on the Mahamad of the community that year. Nunes da Costa was an official agent of the Portuguese Crown, and Manuel de Pina, who was a relative of his, had dedicated the book to him. In the end, however, the book met an unfortunate fate, for in 1669 the Mahamad again forbade its distribution and ordered its confiscation. ¹⁸¹

Daniel Levi (Miguel) de Barrios (1635–1701) was the most prominent Spanish poet in seventeenth-century Amsterdam. He was born in Montilla, Andalusia. From the time he settled in Amsterdam in 1662 he published many books in Spanish, mainly poetry and a few plays, which were intended not just for a Jewish audience but also for a larger, Catholic Hispanic readership in the Southern Netherlands, and even in Spain itself. 182 The rabbis who were asked to examine his work condemned his use of imagery taken from classical mythology, including the pagan gods, and they objected strongly to his positive attitude towards Christian symbols in some of his poems, which were intended for a Catholic readership. However, most of all they were bitterly opposed to his erotic poetry, which sometimes verged on the pornographic. In 1663 the Mahamad forbade the printing of his book Flor de Apolo ('The Flower of Apollo'), as recommended by the censors they had appointed, and in 1672 they forbade the circulation of his book Coro de las Musas ('The Choir of the Muses'), which had been printed without their authorization, after three rabbis examined it and reported that they had found 'scandalous things' in it. 183 He printed some of his works in Brussels (or else falsified the name of the place where they were printed) in order to circumvent community censorship and to hide his Jewish identity from Christian readers. However, even works whose distribution was forbidden in the community were widely known among its members. De Barrios, moreover, received help and relief from the Sephardi community, which also made documents available to him so that he could write a series of works on the history of its institutions and leading members. These were collected and published in 1683-4 in his collection Triumpho del Govierno Popular. Among his patrons were members of Spain's nobility, but he was given most support by the social elite of his own community, especially by those magnates who engaged in diplomacy and served as the agents of kings and princes. 184

Among the talented poets active in the Sephardi community special mention

¹⁸¹ I. S. Révah, 'Les Écrivains Manuel de Pina et Miguel de Barrios et la censure de la communauté judéo portugaise d'Amsterdam', *Tesoro de los judios sefardies*, 7 (1965), lxxvii–xc: lxxv; Pieterse, *Daniel Levi de Barrios*, 15–30; Swetschinski, *Reluctant Cosmopolitans*, 243; Den Boer, *La literatura sefardi de Amsterdam*, 84, 86, 87.

¹⁸² K. R. Scholberg, La poesía religiosa de Miguel de Barrios (Madrid, [1964]); I. García Gavilán, La poesía amorosa en el 'Coro de las Musas' de Miguel de Barrios (Córdoba 2002); Den Boer, La literatura sefardí, v. index.

¹⁸³ Révah, 'Les Écrivains Manuel de Pina et Miguel de Barrios'; Swetschinski, *Reluctant Cosmopolitans*, 243–7; Den Boer, *La literatura sefardí de Amsterdam*, 85, 87–91.

¹⁸⁴ K. R. Scholberg, 'Miguel de Barrios and the Amsterdam Sephardic Community', *Jewish Quarterly Review*, 53 (1962–3), 120–59; Pieterse, *Daniel Levi de Barrios*, 43–136; Den Boer, *La literatura sefardí de Amsterdam*, 296, 107, 187, 189, 317.

must be made of Abraham Gomes Silveyra, a native of Spain who was educated in Amsterdam and settled in Antwerp in about 1684. He enjoyed success with his poems, some of them satirical, which he wrote in Spanish, but he was particularly noteworthy for his polemical writings, which remained in manuscript. B During the eighteenth century the standard of Iberian poetry declined among the Sephardim in Holland, and only David del Valle Saldaña (1699–1755), who arrived as a New Christian from Badajoz and settled in Amsterdam in 1724, left behind a commendable book of religious poetry, the *Certamen penitentiale* (1733), as well as a good number of poems in manuscript, including two collections of erotic poetry.

Secular prose was not encouraged as much as poetry. The outstanding author in this field was Joseph Penso de la Vega (1650–92), who had a fine literary style in both Spanish and Portuguese. His upbringing included Jewish and Iberian elements, added to an impressive knowledge of classical literature, and his work comprises both religious and secular subjects. His Spanish book, *Rumbos peligrosos* (1683), includes three novellas in typically Baroque style. His most important and original work is *Confusión de Confusiones* (1688), in which, by means of an imaginary conversation between a merchant, a shareholder, and a philosopher, he gives a witty account of the mechanisms governing the stock exchange and of the dangers involved in it. He does so against the background of the great crisis that shook the Amsterdam stock exchange that year, as a result of which Jews were accused, for the first time, of exerting artificial influence on the price of shares. ¹⁸⁸

Literary creation, especially work in Spanish and Portuguese, was supported to a large extent by wealthy patrons who belonged to the social elite of the Sephardi community. The most prominent among these men received titles of nobility in recognition of the financial services they provided to the rulers and princes of various states, and they made every effort to imitate the ways of the European aristocracy, which included patronage of the arts. Some of the splendid houses they purchased in Amsterdam became tourist attractions, among them the Belmonte residence in the Herengracht, the Nunes da Costa residence in the Joden Herengracht (now the Niewe Herengracht; Plate II), and the large house on Breestraat (Sint Antoniesbreestraat) bought by Isaac de Pinto (Plate 30) in 1651 and enlarged by his son David Emmanuel in

¹⁸⁵ K. Brown and H. den Boer (eds.), El barroco sefardí: Abraham Gómez Silveira (Kassel, 2000).

¹⁸⁶ D. del Valle Saldaña, El Afrodiseo y otras Obras literarias, ed. K. Brown with H. den Boer (Mérida-Zafra, 1997).

¹⁸⁷ Den Boer, *La literatura sefardí*, 55, 99, 104, 105, 194–9, 201; E. Gutwirth, 'Problemas curiosos: Joseph Penso de la Vega y la alusión clásica', in Díaz Esteban (ed.), *Los judaizantes en Europa*, 185–92; M. T. Bnaya, 'La náusea del manjar ordinario', ibid. 55–63.

¹⁸⁸ J. I. Israel, 'Een merkwaardig literair werk en de Amsterdamse effectenmarkt in 1688: Joseph Penso de la Vega's "Confusión de Confusiones"', *De zeventiende eeuw*, 6 (1990), 159–65; id., *Diasporas within a Diaspora: Jews, Crypto-Jews and the World Maritime Empires* (1540–1740) (Leiden, 2002), 449–87; Swetschinski, *Reluctant Cosmo-politans*, 145–6, 162, 278; Den Boer, 'La literatura', 206–16.

1686. Those who lived in The Hague bought homes on the prestigious Lange Voorhout boulevard and in the wealthy area around the Korte Voorhout. These magnates also collected works of art, rare books, manuscripts, and valuable curiosities to dazzle the eyes of their high-ranking visitors. It was important to them to present a splendid and illustrious image of Judaism to the Christion elite with whom they came in contact. They kept carriages and horses, and even yachts, with servants to supply all their needs. Members of the Belmonte, Nunes da Costa, Lopes Suasso, and Pinto families, and others like them, used the artists under their patronage for social and diplomatic ends. 189 Manuel de Belmonte (agente of the Spanish embassy in The Hague, and since 1679 residente of the Spanish Netherlands), who supported the poet Daniel Levi de Barrios, gave his patronage to two literary academies established by several writers and poets of the Sephardi community in Amsterdam, the 'del Temor Divino' (Divine Fear) in 1676 and 'de los Floridos' (The Gifted) in 1685. These two academies functioned in the manner of the Spanish literary academies in Iberia, with a certain Italian influence. The participants belonged to the community's social and cultural elite, and in their discussions they emphasized rhetoric rather than ideas. 190

The custom of buying summer homes was widespread, not only among the magnates of the community, but also among a broad stratum of affluent Sephardi merchants, who bought houses for recreation along the banks of the Amstel and the Vecht. They also patronized gentile authors and artists as one of the ways to enhance their standing in broader social circles. ¹⁹¹

Along with the wealthy merchants, a number of physicians also joined the literary academies, for they had gained special status in the Sephardi social hierarchy (PLATE 29). Their presence among the ranks of the *parnasim* added a tone of respectability to the community leadership, and some of them also took part in the discussions of the literary academies. The medical profession was much favoured among the New Christians; in Iberia it was referred to by some as a 'Jewish profession'. Not only did they continue to practise medicine in Amsterdam, but they also encouraged subsequent generations to take it up. In the wealthier families it was customary to hire private tutors to teach Latin to the children, to prepare them to study medicine at the university. Up to the end of the century about thirty Jewish physicians (mostly Sephardim) belonged up to the Collegium Medicum of the city, founded in 1638. A few, such as Abraham Zacuto (Zacutus Lusitanus, 1575–1642), brought an outstanding professional reputation with them from Iberia. Because of their fame they were sought out by many well-known people, including nobility from outside Holland. In 1625 Joseph Bueno

¹⁸⁹ Israel, *Diasporas within a Diaspora*, 489–509; D. Swetschinsky and L. Schönduve, *De familie Lopes Suasso, financiers van Willem III* (Zwolle, 1988); Swetschinski, *Reluctant Cosmopolitans*, 132–8.

¹⁹⁰ Swetchinski, Reluctant Cosmopolitans, 299–302; Kaplan, From Christianity to Judaism, 286–302, 418–30; Den Boer, La literatura sefardí de Amsterdam, 137–8, 140–2, 145–6.

¹⁹¹ Israel, Diasporas within a Diaspora, 489–509; Fuks-Mansfeld, De Sefardim, 144–7; Gans, Memorbook, 110–18.

treated Prince Maurits on his deathbed. These physicians may be considered the core of the secular intelligentsia that developed in this community. Sephardim attended Dutch universities from at least the middle of the seventeenth century. Between 1655 and 1685 eleven Sephardi students from the Amsterdam community received the degree of doctor of medicine at Leiden University. It is also known that a number of Jews studied at Harderwijk and Franeker universities, especially during the second half of the seventeenth century. 193

The theatre, which received an enormous boost in Hispanic society during the Golden Age, was naturally well represented in a community so steeped in Iberian culture. In Amsterdam, moreover, the theatre also became an important element in the entertainment of the local bourgeoisie. Sephardi Jews loved the stage, and in this field too members of the social elite provided welcome patronage. It was their custom to have theatrical troupes and opera singers hold performances in their homes, and to invite large audiences for them from among the members of the community. Evidence of organized theatrical activity within the Amsterdam Sephardi community dates from at least the end of the seventeenth century, when a pakhuis (storehouse) was rented for the performance of plays in Spanish. In 1708 a group of devotees of Spanish comedy asked the Amsterdam municipality for permission to present plays in Spanish in the Schouwburg on Wednesdays, the day when ordinary plays were not put on there. The request was refused on the grounds that Jewish spectators would stop coming to the theatre on the other days of the week. In 1750 an association of patrons of the Spanish theatre was founded. In addition to Spanish plays, it presented French plays in Spanish translation, in keeping with changes in taste and style. 194 The social elite of the community invited singers and musicians to perform in their splendid homes, sometimes for special public events, but at times also on a regular basis, and it is also known that members of the Sephardi community frequented the Amsterdam opera. Between 1734 and 1742 numerous concerts and operatic performances were held in the luxurious home of Jacob (Francisco) López de Liz in The Hague. The host employed a group of musicians and retained the services of the famous violinist and composer Jean Marie Leclair the Elder for two years. 195

The post of cantor in the Amsterdam congregation must also be mentioned in this connection. As in other western Sephardi congregations, but here with even more

¹⁹² Swetchinski, Reluctant Cosmopolitans, 195–6, 234, 236–7, 301; Kaplan, From Christianity to Judaism, 200 ff.

¹⁹³ Kaplan, An Alternative Path to Modernity, 196–210; I. van Esso, 'Het aandeel der Joden in de natuurwetenschappen in de Nederlanden', in Brugmans and Frank (eds.), Geschiedenis der Joden in Nederland, i. 643–79.

¹⁹⁴ J. S. da Silva Rosa, 'De Joden in den schouwburg en in de opera te Amsterdam gedurende de 17de en de 18de eeuw', *De Vrijdagavond*, 2 (1925), 313–16, 328–9; H. den Boer, 'La literatura hispano-portuguesa de los sefardíes de Amsterdam en su contexto histórico-social (siglos XVII y XVIII)' (doctoral thesis, University of Amsterdam, 1992), 161–71, 311–35; Fuks-Mansfeld, *De Sefardim*, 140; Swetschinski, *Reluctant Cosmopolitans*, 286–9.

¹⁹⁵ I. Adler, Musical Life and Tradition of the Portuguese Jewish Community of Amsterdam in the Eighteenth Century (Jerusalem, 1974), 11–14.

justification, this post was one of the most important in the community. Though the cantorial arts would seem to belong to the religious sphere, there is no doubt that they were strongly influenced by secular trends. Of all the office-holders in the community, only the hakham received a higher salary. From the second half of the seventeenth century, the appointment of a new cantor became one of the most colourful events in the life of the community. At first the parnasim alone used to appoint him, but after 1648 he was chosen by all the members of the congregation. The elections developed into public singing contests. The fame of some of the candidates drew large audiences to the synagogue on the day of the contests, and Ashkenazim and even Christians were present to hear the contestants sing. Although the by-laws emphasized that the successful candidate must be chosen on the basis of his moral virtue and piety, people generally chose the most impressive singer. There is evidence that on festive Sephardi occasions, such as the dedication of the Esnoga in 1675, the cantor's singing was accompanied by musical instruments. In the first half of the eighteenth century Abraham Caceres stood out as the most important composer of the community, writing melodies for the cantors of the congregation. Towards the 1770s liturgical music by Cristiano Giuseppe Lidarti (1730–c.1793) was often in use. 196

Although the Sephardim did not excel as painters, and their achievements in that field are unremarkable, there were nonetheless a few artists among them, such as Aaron (Aron) de Chaves and Jacob Cardoso Ribeyro, who studied with Jan Lievens in about 1669. The Italian Jewish painter Shalom Salom Italia lived in Amsterdam between 1640 and 1649, producing portraits of Menasseh ben Israel and Jacob Judah Leon Templo among others. The latter was famous for his writings about the Temple of King Solomon and for the plaster model he made of it. When he moved from Middelburg to Amsterdam in 1642 he exhibited his model to the general public at a set hour daily in his home. 197

The Emergence of an Ashkenazi Local Culture

Any visitor to the square between the Ashkenazi and Sephardi synagogues in Amsterdam was immediately able to distinguish Jews of the various communities by their external appearance. The wealthy Sephardim and those of the middle class dressed no differently from the Dutch Christian population of comparable social status, wearing similar cloaks, hats, and wigs. The rabbis had beards, but few other men did, and those

¹⁹⁶ Ibid. 15 ff., 79-92.

¹⁹⁷ J. S. da Silva Rosa, 'Salom Italia', Maandblad voor de Geschiedenis van de Joden in Nederland, I (1947–8), 214–23; M. Narkiss, 'The Oeuvre of the Jewish Engraver Salom Italia (1619–1655?)' (Heb.), Tarbiz, 25/4 (1956), 88–101; E. D. Bilski and S. Assaf, Salom Italia's Esther Scrolls and the Dutch Golden Age (Amsterdam, 2011); A. K. Offenberg, 'Een vrijwel onbekende, ingekleurde prent op groot format van Jacob Juda Leon Templo', StR 26 (1992), 125–31; id., 'Jacob Jehuda Leon en zijn Tempelmodel: Een joods-christelijk project', De Zeventiende Eeuw: Cultuur in de Nederlanden in interdisciplinair perspectief, 9 (1993), 35–50.

with beards usually adopted current Dutch styles. The Sephardi Jews who had arrived from the east stood out because of their oriental robes and turbans. During the eighteenth century, French influence on fashion grew, and this was reflected in the dress of the Sephardim. The Ashkenazi Jews, by contrast, stood out in their central European or Polish dress, their leather hats, and the caftans they had brought from their places of origin.

For the most part, the Sephardi *parnasim* did not campaign against any particular style of dress in their congregation, unlike the Ashkenazi leaders, who did intervene in this area from time to time. They condemned the custom that had been adopted by many women just before they were married of wearing wigs instead of cutting their hair and covering their heads with scarves. For the sake of modesty, women were forbidden in 1732 to wear the hoop skirts fashionable among the regent class (*regentenstand*). 198

However, these were only external differences. Beyond them, a gulf yawned between the two communities and their cultures. In contrast to the Sephardi command of languages, until the 1680s most of the Ashkenazim in Amsterdam only knew Yiddish, which was their spoken language and that in which they kept their community records throughout the whole period of the Republic. The Poles originally spoke Yiddish in the various east European dialects to which they were accustomed. Within a short time, however, a Judaeo-Dutch dialect arose; Jews in the large Jewish centres in eastern Europe had difficulty understanding this western Yiddish, which was not always clearly differentiated from ordinary Dutch. 199

However, the Ashkenazi community underwent significant social and cultural changes, culminating towards the end of the seventeenth century in the emergence of a middle class. As their involvement with world trade grew, so too did the ambition to expand their cultural horizons. ²⁰⁰ It is not clear when the Yiddish newspaper *Dinstagishe un Fraytagishe Kuranten* began to appear in Amsterdam. It was published twice a week, on Tuesdays and Fridays, and the extant copies cover the period between August 1686 and December 1687. It was first printed by Uri Phoebus Halevi and later was acquired by the print shop of David de Castro Tartas, but all that time the compositor, who was apparently also the editor, was the proselyte Moshe ben Avraham Avinu. The newspaper mainly published international news from a Dutch perspective, translated from Dutch newspapers and adapted to the needs and taste of the Jewish public. The few articles containing news about Jews were also taken from the Dutch press, and they were written from a distance, exactly as in the non-Jewish newspapers. While the

¹⁹⁸ Hirschel, 'Cultuur en Volksleven', 487 ff.; Gans, Memorbook, 109.

¹⁹⁹ S. Berger, 'Yiddish Book Production in Amsterdam between 1650–1800: Local and International Aspects', in Kaplan (ed.), *The Dutch Intersection*, 203–12: 207–9; M. Aptroot, 'Northwestern Yiddish: The State of Research', in D. B. Kerler (ed.), *History of Yiddish Studies* (Reading, 1991), 41–59.

²⁰⁰ Turniansky, 'On Didactic Literature in Yiddish in Amsterdam', 166 ff.

newspaper was not aimed only at the Jews of Amsterdam, without doubt it did express the cultural and bourgeois aspirations of the Ashkenazim of that city, who wanted to get a view of the outside world through it.²⁰¹

At the end of the seventeenth century there is increasing evidence that some of the Ashkenazim, especially the wealthier among them, were already capable of reading Dutch. The simple nature of many members of the Ashkenazi community was reflected in many publications which were meant for unsophisticated people. From the beginning of the eighteenth century, Ashkenazim could obtain popular almanacs in Yiddish, modelled on familiar Dutch examples, which included chronicles and stories, together with popular advice on matters of health, hygiene, the weather, and nutrition.²⁰²

Mizmor letodah ('Hymn of Thanksgiving'), printed in 1644, was the first Yiddish book to be published in Amsterdam. It retells stories from the Torah in poetical form, which the readers were expected to sing to familiar melodies, to help them learn the content and moral lessons of the stories. 203 Between 1648 and 1723 ten historical poems were printed in Amsterdam, each of which recounted a historical event of importance to the Ashkenazi diaspora, mainly persecutions and pogroms in various communities. Some of these publications were reprints of works that had been printed elsewhere, but some of them appeared in Amsterdam for the first time. The name of the melody to which the poem is meant to be sung is indicated on some of them.²⁰⁴ One poem, Ayn sheyn nay lid fun meshiekh ('A Fine New Poem about the Messiah'), was printed in 1666. In it the author, Jacob Tausk of Prague, tells how he first heard about the appearance of Shabetai Tsevi while he was in Amsterdam. 205 However, it should be pointed out that all these historical poems refer to events that took place in the entire Ashkenazi realm, from Vilna and the Ukraine to Kraków and Prague, and from Frankfurt am Main and Worms to Turkey. Though there are signs indicating that they were printed for export to other communities, it is likely that they also found their way to Ashkenazi readers in Amsterdam.

History books were very popular in Ashkenazi society in the early modern period. Historiographical works were translated into Yiddish and frequently reprinted to satisfy the great demand for them. The Ashkenazim in Amsterdam were part of this trend, and a number of history books translated into Yiddish were printed in several editions,

²⁰¹ H. Pach, 'Arranging Reality: The Editing Mechanisms of the World's First Yiddish Newspaper, the Kurant (Amsterdam, 1686–1687)' (doctoral thesis, University of Amsterdam, 2014); id., 'Moushe's Choices: Was the Compositor of the Oldest Yiddish Newspaper a Creator or an Epigone?', in Berger and Zwiep (eds.), *Epigonism* [StR 40], 195–204.

²⁰² Hirschel, 'Cultuur en Volksleven', 458–9. ²⁰³ Berger, *Producing Redemption in Amsterdam*, 58, 147, 149. ²⁰⁴ C. Shmeruk, 'Yiddish "Historical Songs" in Amsterdam in the 17th and 18th Century' (Heb.), in J. Michman (ed.), *Studies on the History of Dutch Jewry*, vol. iv (1984), 143–61.

 $^{^{205}}$ Fuks and Fuks-Mansfeld, *Hebrew Typography in the Northern Netherlands*, ii. 454–5; Shmeruk, 'Yiddish 'Historical Songs'', 144–5.

sometimes with editorial changes and adaptations. ²⁰⁶ Thus, for example, the existing Yiddish translation of *Sefer yosipon* was reprinted in 1661 and the one of *Shevet yehudah* was published in 1648 and 1700. ²⁰⁷ The Yiddish books were intended for an increasing audience of 'ordinary householders, men and women' or for 'the ordinary man who is not versant in the holy tongue'. The history books could expand educational horizons and provide pleasure as well. ²⁰⁸ To this end, in 1691 Yiddish translations of the *Itinerary* of Benjamin of Tudela and *Mikveh yisra'el* of Menasseh ben Israel were published together in a single volume. By reading these books, Amsterdam Jews could voyage to other Jewish worlds and revel in legends and tales of the fate of the Ten Lost Tribes and of the existence of the Jews in faraway lands. ²⁰⁹

At the end of the seventeenth century there is increasing evidence that some of the Ashkenazim, especially the wealthier among them, were already capable of reading Dutch. Most of the Ashkenazim had very poor Hebrew, and sometimes knew little more than how to read falteringly from the prayer-book. Much criticism was voiced on this subject as early as the late seventeenth century. In the second decade of the eighteenth century, Hebrew textbooks began to appear in the Ashkenazi community, expressing a position critical of the existing situation. The critics were most probably influenced by what they saw in the educational structures and systematic pedagogy of their Sephardi neighbours. In the 1690s textbooks on various professional subjects began to appear in Yiddish, with the aim of expanding the education of young people and preparing them to deal in commerce. For example, Sefer yedias hakheshbon ('Book of the Knowledge of Arithmetic') was published in Amsterdam in 1699. This was the first arithmetic book in Yiddish, apparently translated from an earlier book written in Hebrew. It was designed to teach basic arithmetic and bookkeeping and provided information about coinage, measures, and weights and their conversion rates in various countries.210

Joseph Maarssen (d. 1754) was without doubt one of the leaders in publishing didactic works for the Ashkenazi community in Amsterdam. ²¹¹ In 1677 his father, Jacob Maarssen, published his own Yiddish translation of a Dutch folktale, *Di zibn vayzn maynster fun Roym* ('The Seven Sages of Rome'). ²¹² Since his father translated from Dutch, it seems reasonable to assume that Joseph Maarssen learned that language as a child. He was apparently a schoolteacher, and on the basis of his mastery of Dutch and

²⁰⁶ Wallet, 'Links in a Chain', 51–8.

Fuks and Fuks-Mansfeld, Hebrew Typography in the Northern Netherlands, ii. 252, 407; Berger, Producing Redemption in Amsterdam, 66, 144. Wallet, 'Links in a Chain', 54-6.

²⁰⁹ Fuks and Fuks-Mansfeld, Hebrew Typography in the Northern Netherlands, ii. 376–7; Berger, Producing Redemption in Amsterdam, 66, 81, 177–9.

²¹⁰ Turniansky, 'On Didactic Literature in Yiddish', 164–6.

²¹¹ J. Shatzky, 'The Prefaces of Joseph Maarssen's Writings' (Yiddish), YIVO bleter, 12 (1938), 377–89; Dotan-Ofir, 'History, Books, and Society', 245–51.

²¹² Fuks and Fuks-Mansfeld, Hebrew Typography in the Northern Netherlands, ii. 456; Berger, Producing Redemption in Amsterdam, 61, 184.

his knowledge of European literature, he concentrated on composing translations into Yiddish at the start of his career. He played a central role in the cultural integration of the Ashkenazim in Holland. In 1707 he published a Yiddish translation of the Dutch chronicle about the undertakers' riots in Amsterdam, which took place in 1696.²¹³ Three years later he published a Yiddish work, Sheyne artlekhe geshikhtn, which contained a translation and adaptation of seven stories from Boccaccio's Decameron. Maarssen translated the book from the abridged Dutch edition, showing impressive awareness of the differences between the Dutch and Yiddish languages.²¹⁴ His mastery of Dutch and his strong connection with it were expressed in his Yiddish translation of Ben Sira, published in 1712, translated not from the Hebrew original but rather from a Dutch translation. His educational tendencies were expressed strongly in two Yiddish books of correspondence models, published in 1713 and 1715. The first, Hinukh lana'ar ('Education of the Youth'), contains examples of business letters and a long list of Latin, Italian, and French words whose use was common in commerce at the time; it was reprinted a number of times until 1765. The second, Leshon zahav ('Tongue of Gold'), contains letters to relatives and for social purposes. These books reflect the process of acculturation undergone by the Ashkenazi Jews in Amsterdam and their aspiration to equip the younger generation with useful tools for success in business as well as good manners and proper standards of social behaviour.²¹⁵

The activity of two natives of Amsterdam, Menahem Man Amelander (1698–c.1743) and his brother-in-law, Eleasar Soesman Rudelsum (d. 1780), both separately and together, reflects the social ideals that some members of the Ashkenazi social and intellectual elite acquired during the eighteenth century. Rudelsum possessed a rich rabbinical background, and he also knew European languages and had a broad general education as well. He taught Hebrew informally to Christian students in the Atheneum Illustre of Amsterdam. In 1741 he published a book of Hebrew grammar in Dutch entitled *Mohar yisra'el* ('The Dowry of Israel'), to which was appended a Dutch–Hebrew and Hebrew–Dutch dictionary. He also translated *Menorat hamaor* ('The Candelabrum of Light'), the work of the fourteenth-century Sephardi rabbi Isaac Aboab, into Dutch. The translation, entitled *De kandelaar des ligts*, was published in 1764. Though it was published by a Christian printer and was intended for a Christian readership for the purpose of presenting a handbook of Jewish ethics, Rudelsum most probably intended his work for the educated Ashkenazi reader as well, in order

²¹³ Wallet, 'Links in a Chain', 59.

²¹⁴ M. Aptroot, "I know this book of mine will cause offence . . .": A Yiddish Adaptation of Boccaccio's Decameron (Amsterdam 1710)', Zutot: Perspectives on Jewish Culture, 3 (2003), 152–9; Berger, Producing Redemption in Amsterdam, 16, 24, 62, 102, 121.

²¹⁵ M. Aptroot, 'Yiddish and the German Standard in the Letter Writing Manuals of Yousef ben Yankev Maarssen', in J. C. Frakes and J. Dauber (eds.), *Between Two Worlds: Yiddish-German Encounters* (= StR 41) (Leuven, 2009), 13–27; Turniansky, 'On Didactic Literature in Yiddish', 164; Berger, *Producing Redemption in Amsterdam*, 24, 114 n.74, 150.

to present the Sephardi Jewish tradition, which he admired as being more elevated and cultivated than that of other Jewish communities, as he states explicitly in the introduction.²¹⁶

Between 1725 and 1729 the two brothers-in-law published Magishei minhah ('Those Who Bring an Offering'), a Yiddish translation of the Bible with commentaries. The Prophets and Writings sections were in fact a re-edition of Sefer hamagid ('The Book of the Herald'), which was the first Yiddish translation of these books and was very widely circulated in the Ashkenazi world. Magishei minhah was very popular and reprinted at least seventeen times in the following century.²¹⁷ In 1749 Rudelsum also published Mikra meforash ('Scripture Interpreted'), a Yiddish textbook for children, but also an aid for teachers. The contents of the Pentateuch are presented in the form of a dialogue, a kind of catechism, between the rabbi, who asks questions, and the pupil, who answers. Some of the questions require knowledge and memory, but many of them mainly require understanding. Rudelsum stuck to the literal meaning of the text, in contrast to other books in Yiddish which emphasized Midrash. In addition to conveying basic understanding of the content of the Pentateuch, the book also sought to guide the pupil in his conduct as a Jew.²¹⁸ In their writing, Amelander and Rudelsum sought to influence the manner of teaching and systems of education in their community, taking a critical view of traditional education as it was practised. In certain senses they can be seen as precursors of the pedagogy of the Jewish Enlightenment in western Europe.

In 1743 Amelander published his monumental historical work in Yiddish, *She'eris yisroel*, as the second part of *Sefer yosipon*, the medieval history of the Jews until the destruction of the Second Temple, which he had translated anew and published along with his own work. The original book by Amelander is a narrative of the history of the Jewish people from the destruction of the Second Temple until 1740, claiming to comprise the entire Jewish diaspora. The author made extensive use of Jewish sources, especially of the medieval and early modern Hebrew chronicles, but he also used non-Jewish sources, especially the book by the Huguenot pastor Jacques Basnage, *Histoire des Juifs depuis Jésus-Christ jusqu'à présent*. Amelander's book deviates from the tradition of medieval Jewish chronicles in that the author sought to write a continuous account of Jewish history, divided into chapters, each of which had a title, and it is indicative of

²¹⁶ J. W. Wesselius, 'Eleazar Soesman's *Mohar Yisrael*', in A. K. Offenberg, E. G. L. Schrijver, and F. Hoogewoud (eds.), *Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana: Treasures of Jewish Booklore. Marking the 200th Anniversary of the Birth of Leeser Rosenthal*, 1794–1994 (Amsterdam, 1996), 74–5; S. Berger, 'Ashkenazim Read Sephardim in Seventeenthand Eighteenth-Century Amsterdam', *StR* 35/2 (2001), 253–65: 257–9; Wallet, 'Links in a Chain', 71–9.

 $^{^{217}}$ Turniansky, 'On Didactic Literature in Yiddish', 173–4; Berger, Producing Redemption in Amsterdam, 99, 100, 106, 149, 166, 179, 186–8, 193.

²¹⁸ C. Turniansky, "Mikra Meforash" by Eliezer Sussman Rudelsum: An Unusual Yiddish Textbook for the Study of the Humash' (Heb.), in S. Japhet (ed.), *The Bible in the Light of Its Interpreters. Sarah Kamin Memorial Volume* (Jerusalem, 1994), 497–517; id., 'On Didactic Yiddish Literature', 175–7; Berger, *Producing Redemption in Amsterdam*, 106, 140.

the process of acculturation undergone by educated Ashkenazim in Amsterdam. The book was a great success and more than thirty editions of it were published, as well as translations into Hebrew and Dutch.²¹⁹

Abraham Hayyim Braatbard (1699–1786), who participated in several of the publishing projects of Moshe Frankfurt, along with Amelander, wrote a Yiddish chronicle in fluent style, *Ayn naye kornayk fun 1740–1752*, which he did not publish. This chronicle was a kind of sequel to Amelander's book and concentrates mainly on the Jews of Amsterdam. Though it contains 291 chapters, it describes only a relatively short period, from 1740 to 1752. ²²⁰

Unlike the Sephardim, the Ashkenazim had no great interest in the stage, but the custom of putting on a play (*purim shpil*) for the Purim holiday on occasion gave rise to more organized efforts to set up a permanent theatre, modelled on the local Dutch example and of course on that of their Sephardi brethren. This may be gathered from the appeal of a group of Ashkenazi Jews in 1707 to the city authorities of Amsterdam to permit them to perform their plays in 'hoogduytsche jootse ende Smouse tael' (German Jewish and Yiddish) for 'veertien dagen vóor ende veertien dagen na' (fourteen days before and fourteen days after) the Fast of Esther.²²¹

Prejudice, Stereotypes, and Integration

Despite the expressions of hostility towards Jews that can sometimes be found in theological and polemical works written in the Republic in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, physical attacks on Jews were rare and had no serious repercussions. There were scholars, Gisbertus Voetius and Antonius Hulsius for example, who accepted the truth of the blood libels of which the Jews had been accused since the twelfth century in various Christian countries, and even Grotius believed this defamation, at least during part of his life. 222 Yet there is no record of a single incident in which Jews were charged with this heinous crime in the Republic, except for an astonishing affair that took place in Nijmegen in 1715, when an apostate Jew named Isaac Saxel accused the local community of murdering a Christian child for religious reasons. Though all the Jews of the city were arrested, they were released three weeks later, when their innocence was proved. 223

Occasionally there were incidents during which damage was caused to Jewish

²¹⁹ Wallet, 'Links in a Chain', 109–208.

²²⁰ Ibid. 216–25; L. Fuks, 'De Jiddische kroniek van Abraham Chaim Braatbard (1740–1752)', *Jaarboek Amstelodamum*, 48 (1956), 113–71; R. G. Fuks-Mansfeld, 'Abraham Hayim ben Zvi Hirsh Braatbard: A Hebrew Type-setter in the First Half of the Eighteenth Century', *Zutot: Perspectives on Jewish Culture*, 1 (2001), 133–7.

²²¹ Hirschel, 'Cultuur en Volksleven', 490 ff.; C. Shmeruk, *Yiddish Literature: Aspects of its History* (Tel Aviv, 1978), 83.

²²² Van den Berg, *Joden en christenen*, 18–19.

²²³ J. J. Mauricius, Kort begrip wegens de historie van zekeren Isak Saxel en de beschuldiging der joden te Nijmegen over het slachten van een christenkind (Amsterdam, 1716).

property. The most notorious of these, the 'aansprekers oproer' (undertakers' riots), took place in Amsterdam at the end of January 1696. The municipal government at the time decided that the funerals of the poor would have to be more modest in order to reduce the number of undertakers and thus limit expenses. Jews were not affected by this measure, for their communities paid the expenses for the burial of the poor. The undertakers rebelled, and, although their anger was not directed mainly at the Jews, they struck the Jewish quarter as well. They robbed four houses, one of which belonged to the wealthy Pinto family (Plate 28). Jews participated in the organized defence put up against the looters. They were provided with arms and later praised for their courageous conduct.²²⁴ This incident cannot, however, be viewed as anti-Jewish, for the riots were aimed at the city and wealthy merchants in general. In 1707 Joseph Maarssen translated an anonymous pamphlet about this incident from Dutch to Yiddish. The pamphlet had been published in 1696, and its Yiddish title is *Ayn beshraybung fun der rebeleray tsu Amsterdam*.²²⁵

In the eighteenth century the stereotype of the cheating Jew, with little education and speaking a corrupt jargon, *smous*, gained greater acceptance. The typical seventeenth-century portrayal of Jews as an aristocratic and wealthy group, based on the impression made by the Sephardi elite, made way for a new image which sometimes failed to distinguish between Sephardim and Ashkenazim, that of the *smousjood*. By the end of the seventeenth century people in some areas, and authors of Dutch popular literature, had begun to mock the debased accent of the Ashkenazi Jews (*smousen*). In the comedy *De Spilpenning of de verkwistende vrouw* ('The Spendthrift; or, the Profligate Woman') by Thomas Asselijn, which was first published in 1696, the father and husband of the spendthrift woman disguise themselves as Polish Jews, speak in an accent recognizable as Ashkenazi, and try with cunning to buy expensive things from the woman for a low price. In 1741 the Dutch painter Cornelis Troost depicted this scene in a splendid canvas showing the two men disguised in costumes typical of Polish Jews (Plate 31). The play was not antisemitic, but it did depict the Jews, with their coarse manner of speech and their cunning, in ridiculous fashion.²²⁶

But it was not until the early eighteenth century that this mockery sometimes turned into antisemitic venom. The stock exchange crash of 1720, in which Jewish speculators were involved, caused riots, with sporadic attacks on Jewish brokers (Plate 32). It also gave rise to satirical writing that attributed to the Jews a prominent role in, although not complete blame for, the crisis. That was clearly reflected in the drawings and caricatures, comedies and songs that were printed in *Het groote Tafereel der dwaasheid* ('The Great Tableau of Folly', 1720). During the 1730s and 1740s low-quality

²²⁴ Fuks-Mansfeld, De Sefardim, 120–30.

²²⁵ L. Fuks and R. Fuks-Mansfeld, 'Joodse geschiedschrijving in de Republiek in de 17e en 18e eeuw', *StR 6* (1972), 137–65: 148–9.

²²⁶ Gans, Memorbook, 177–8; J. W. Niemeijer, Cornelis Troost 1696–1750 (Assen, 1973), 279.

broadsheets appeared, written by Claus van Laar, Jacob Campo Weyerman, and others, in which the stereotype of the *smous* was endowed with an unmistakably antisemitic flavour.²²⁷ In 1737 a *parnas* of the Ashkenazi community of Amsterdam, Aaron Gookes, was arrested on a charge of fraudulent bankruptcy. He died in prison, and many pamphlets and even some books with an antisemitic tone were published about the incident he was connected with.²²⁸

Despite all this, and despite the social and economic shocks that stunned the Jewish population in Holland during the first half of the eighteenth century, Jews felt safe and well integrated in their new homeland. Their vigorous protests in 1745 against the expulsion of the Jews of Prague were unsuccessful, but did ultimately prevent the expulsion of Jews from the rest of Bohemia. Bankers such as Tobias Boas (1696-1782) of The Hague, who became the leading Ashkenazi in the Republic, and Benedictus Levie Gompertz of Nijmegen came to the aid of their persecuted brethren. Their action reflects the emergence of a Jewish leadership confident of its power and connections, men who were aware of their solid economic position and able to mobilize various forces in the Republic to help them in their struggle. These men, especially the economist Isaac de Pinto, a close associate of Prince William IV and a man who played a crucial role in 1748 during the war against France, used their political influence for the benefit of the entire Jewish community in the Republic. They and others like them persuaded the burgomasters of Amsterdam to support the intervention on behalf of the Jews of Prague by the Dutch ambassador in Vienna, because the Jews were loyal subjects, 'and our Republic has good reason to be content with that nation'. 229 Both the Sephardim and the Ashkenazim continued to maintain their uniqueness and difference, as well as their ties to two separate ethnic diasporas with deterritorialized cultures that differed from each other. This basic fact did not change during the first 150 years of Jewish presence in Holland. However, at the same time, especially in Amsterdam and other urban centres where Sephardi and Ashkenazi communities existed, a common Jewish lifestyle emerged, despite the conspicuous differences, which was nourished by the sense of dwelling in a republic that granted them protection, tolerance, and stability.

(1963), 125-64; Gans, Memorboek, 181.

²²⁷ H. Bovenkerk, 'Nederlandse schrijvers tijdens de Republiek over de Joden', in Brugmans and Frank (eds.), *Geschiedenis der Joden in Nederland*, i. 737–44; Huussen, 'De houding', 76. ²²⁸ Gans, *Memorbook*, 174–7. ²²⁹ For Jewish intervention on behalf of the Jews of Bohemia and Moravia, see B. Mevorah, 'Jewish Diplomatic Activities to Prevent the Expulsion of Jews from Bohemia and Moravia in 1744–45' (Heb.), *Zion*, 28

FROM NATIONS TO CITIZENS

Jewish Life in the Low Countries in the Shadow of the Enlightenment 1750–1814

IRENE E. ZWIEP

Introduction: Revolution or Evolution?

'When the Enlightenment blazed a trail through Europe, shaking medieval Judaism to its core . . .'. With these words, Jaap Meijer (1912–93) began his doctoral thesis on the curious career of Isaac da Costa, a 'Sephardic aristocrat', convert to Christianity, and poet. This seemingly straightforward opening encapsulated a complete historical perspective. As Meijer saw it, the *liberté*, *égalité*, *fraternité* of the French Revolution had turned out to be a mixed blessing for the Jews. Emancipation and citizenship—for all their attractions, and despite the good intentions behind them—came at a price, and that price was assimilation. The decision no longer to recognize Jews as a separate nation had brought an end not only to two centuries of Jewish self-government, but also to the vibrant Jewish identity rooted in the collective intimacy of the ghetto. The new Dutch Jews, differing from their fellow citizens in religion only, were forever alienated from that rich yet vulnerable past. From Meijer's perspective, and writing in 1941, the future they had gained in exchange was as vulnerable as ever, and spiritually impoverished to boot. The turning point in his historical narrative was 1796, the year

This chapter is indebted, at many points and in many ways, to Rena Fuks-Mansfeld's chapter 'Verlichting en emancipatie omstreeks 1750–1814' in the 1995 edn. of *De geschiedenis van de joden in Nederland*, 177–203; trans. as 'Enlightenment and Emancipation, from c.1750 to 1814' in the English edn., *The History of the Jews in the Netherlands* (Oxford, 2002), 164–91. It also draws on B. T. Wallet and I. E. Zwiep, 'Locals: Jews in the Early Modern Republic', in J. Karp and A. Sutcliffe (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Judaism*, vol. vii: *The Early Modern World*, 1500–1815 (Cambridge, 2017), 894–922, again without further references.

¹ J. Meijer, Isaac da Costa's weg naar het Christendom: Bijdrage tot de geschiedenis der joodsche problematiek in Nederland (Amsterdam, 1941/1946), 12. For Jaap Meijer as a 'wartime historian' and his indebtedness to Simon Dubnow's diaspora nationalism, see E. Gans, Jaap en Ischa Meijer: Een joodse geschiedenis 1956–1995 (Amsterdam, 2008), 153–71.

² In books such as Erfenis der emancipatie: Het Nederlandse jodendom in de eerste helft van de 19e eeuw (Haarlem,

when Jews in the Batavian Republic were granted full civil rights and equality under the law. As Meijer saw it, this had put an end to the autonomous, authentic, 'medieval' Jewish presence in the Low Countries.

'There is nothing neutral or innocent about cutting up time into units', the French historian Jacques Le Goff wrote in his last, posthumously published book on the uses and perils of periodization.³ By beginning Da Costa's biography on the cusp of modernity, Jaap Meijer was thus making a statement—a critical swipe at what has been termed the 'dialectic of Enlightenment' and the fateful interplay of majority, minority, and the practice of social engineering.⁴ Likewise, it is telling that this new *History of the Jews in the Netherlands* follows an altogether different timeline. Rather than adopting Meijer's perspective and extending chapters 4 and 6 by a couple of decades each, so that 1796, the year of Jewish emancipation, might form the culmination of one and the starting point of the other, it points the camera at the six decades between 1750 and 1814. But what narrative ties together that period, prompting us to evaluate it on its own merits?⁵

This chapter will try to answer that question, in three somewhat incongruent steps. First we will briefly pause to reflect on the dynamics of Jewish history. Situated in the diaspora, that history obviously did not unfold in a vacuum. There are different schools of thought on how to understand the interaction between Jews and their non-Jewish neighbours. Before the Enlightenment, had Judaism always been as autonomous as Meijer claims in his thesis? Or had it, as his opening sentence also seems to suggest, been roused gently or forcefully from its slumbers by outside parties at critical junctures, like a Sleeping Beauty? What models have been developed by historians—especially Dutch Jewish historians—to grasp the difficult balance between Jewish self-reliance and its receptiveness to outside influences? How should we characterize the impact of the Enlightenment from that perspective? And does the term 'Enlightenment' really provide the right conceptual frame for our narrative?

After this theoretical exposition, we will provisionally cut the already brief timespan from 1750 to 1814 in two—pace Le Goff—and turn to the latter period, examining how the Jews in the Low Countries fared after they had been granted equal civil rights in 1796. What did individual citizenship mean for the hitherto semi-autonomous *kehilot* (congregations), for the lived experience of law and religion, and for the way

1963) and *Tussen emancipatie en deportatie* (Heemstede, 1984) Meijer made his definitive statement on this perspective, for which he had laid the groundwork in the summer of 1940 in a series of ten articles published in the *Nieuw Israëlietisch Weekblad*; see Gans, *Jaap en Ischa Meijer*, 610. The conclusion that the pros and cons of emancipation were balanced by the autonomous life of the ghetto community goes back to Salo Baron's influential article 'Ghetto and Emancipation', *Menorah*, 14 (1928), 515–26.

³ J. Le Goff, Must We Divide History into Periods? (New York, 2014), 2.

⁴ On this French model, see P. Raedts, 'Tussen oud en modern: De periodisering van de Middeleeuwen', in M. Grever and H. Jansen (eds.), *De ongrijpbare tijd: Temporaliteit en de constructie van het verleden* (Hilversum, 2001), 49–63.

⁵ Compare P. Ricoeur, *Temps et récit* (Paris, 1983–5).

Jews defined themselves as 'Israelites' while acting as Dutch citizens in civil society and the public sphere? How did the change affect language and habitus, education, culture, and scholarship—how visibly Jewish could they be in the post-revolutionary world of equality and fraternity?

Having thus sketched a preliminary profile of the modern Dutch Jew, our third step will be to turn to the short half-century between 1750 and 1796. Do we find a different kind of Dutch Judaism here, caught in the final stages of what Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie has called *l'histoire immobile?* Or are there traces of the long prelude to modernity, for which Reinhart Koselleck coined the untranslatable German term *Sattelzeit* (1750–1850)? If there was indeed such a long, smooth transition, how might that change our perspective on 1796? On the one hand, a genuine Foucauldian *événement* took place in the Batavian Jewish community that year, the type of event that not only irrevocably changed their world, but also the way they perceived it. On the other hand, an *événement* rarely comes out of the blue, and it is the historian's task to point out unsuspected continuities, with the obvious 'benefit of hindsight'. Is change a question of revolution or of evolution, or perhaps of both? The answer to that question seems to hold the key to modern Dutch Jewish identity.

Jewish History in Motion

Like Jaap Meijer, many present-day historians believe it took a radical transformation to turn pre-modern 'ghetto Jewry' into modern Europeans. Unlike Meijer, however, they locate the initiative for this historic transformation not so much outside the community as within Jewish history itself. Two possible sources suggest themselves: (1) what today is known as early modern Judaism, with its centre of gravity in the seventeenth century, its migratory flows, its creative energy, and its shifting administrative power relations; or (2) the Jewish Enlightenment, which in the late eighteenth century had taken on rabbinical theocracy at its roots. Renowned advocates of the first perspective are Jonathan Israel, who in 1985 introduced the term 'early modern' into Jewish historiography, Yosef Kaplan, who has reconstructed the Sephardi journey to modernity in meticulous detail, 10 and their American colleague David Ruderman, who in 2010 was the first to map the entire 'genome' of early modern Judaism. 11 The solitary champion of the second scenario is the Israeli historian Shmuel Feiner, whose captivating monograph not only unravelled the Berlin Haskalah (Enlightenment,

- ⁶ E. Le Roy Ladurie, 'L'Histoire immobile', Annales: Économies, sociétés, civilisations, 29 (1974), 673–92.
- ⁷ O. Brunner, W. Conze, and R. Koselleck (eds.), Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe: Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland, vol. i (Stuttgart, 1972), pp. xiii–xxviii.
 - 8 M. Foucault, L'Archéologie du savoir (Paris, 1969), 216–31, and id., L'Ordre du discours (Paris, 1971), 55–62.
 - $^9\,$ J. Israel, European Jewry in the Age of Mercantilism, 1550–1750 (Oxford, 1985); see also Ch. 3 above.
- Y. Kaplan, An Alternative Path to Modernity: The Sephardi Diaspora in Western Europe (Leiden, 2000); see also
 Ch. 4 above.
 D. Ruderman, Early Modern Jewry: A New Cultural History (Princeton, 2010).

1770-1800) but also held it responsible for the gap between the religious and the secular that has continued to divide Judaism to this day. ¹²

The differences between the two camps seem irreconcilable. Feiner presents the process of Jewish modernization as an internal, almost local, matter, brief but intense, revolving around the critique of religion voiced by a new Berlin middle class, and the frosty riposte of a rabbinical ancien régime. The early modernists, by contrast, point their lens at global movements. They believe in the inherent interconnectedness of Jewish and non-Jewish history and point to the fluid religious boundaries and shifting identities that emerge from that intersection, slowly but steadily. 'And never the twain shall meet', we think when we view the two models side by side. Yet for all their differences, the two camps seem to agree in one respect: their lack of interest in the eighteenth century, which makes a poor showing in all these narratives. If we are to believe David Ruderman, Jewish culture between 1700 and 1800 was a dreary repetition of seventeenth-century moves; Jonathan Israel loses all interest after the Peace of Utrecht in 1713;13 and Feiner's fragmentary 'early Enlightenment' remains but a vague overture to the 'real' Haskalah, which bursts onto the scene in the 1780s. 14 Even if we put aside the question of who is right, this collective blind spot does not bode well for the historiography of the Jews in the Netherlands on the threshold of a new age.

With or without Enlightenment? Modernization from within or from without? Dutch Jewish historians, too, have delved into the matter. And they, too, generally disregarded the—admittedly often tedious—eighteenth century, to focus on the aftereffects of the turbulent year 1796. Without exception they zoomed in on the question of whether the Decree on the Equal Status of Jewish and All Other Citizens (Decreet over den Gelykstaat der Joodsche met alle andere Burgers) had truly fulfilled its promise of social and legal levelling and equal economic opportunities. Their answer to this question was seldom an unreserved yes, especially in the years following the Second World War.

In 1925, Sigmund Seeligmann (1873–1940) had found abundant evidence in the events of 1796 for his thesis that Dutch Jewry had enjoyed a privileged history. Two years earlier, he had coined the term *species hollandia judaica*—a concept that deliberately evokes Darwin's theory of evolution. ¹⁵ Seeligmann believed that the Jewish newcomers to the Republic had, like all successful life forms, adapted to their new

¹² S. Feiner, *The Jewish Enlightenment* (Philadelphia, 2004); see also id., *The Origins of Secularization in Eighteenth-Century Europe* (Philadelphia, 2010).

¹³ Israel, European Jewry, 252–3; id., The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness and Fall (1477–1806), Oxford History of Early Modern Europe (Oxford, 1995), and Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity, 1650–1750 (Oxford, 2001).

¹⁴ S. Feiner, 'The Early Enlightenment in Eighteenth-Century Judaism' (Heb.), *Tarbiz*, 62 (1998), 189–240; id., *The Jewish Enlightenment*, 21–84.

¹⁵ S. Seeligmann, 'Die Juden in Holland: Eine Charakteristik', in J. Fischer et al. (eds.), *Festskrift i Anledning af Prof D. Simonsen's 70-aarige Fødselsdag* (Copenhagen, 1923), 253–7.

environment to such a degree that by now one could reasonably speak of a distinct Dutch Jewish subspecies. The process of adaptation had been accelerated by favourable local conditions (read: by the legendary Dutch practice of toleration), which had facilitated rapid integration. The Emancipation Decree was but a single stop in this unique trajectory, which had begun in the seventeenth century with the arrival of the Marranos. In Seeligmann's perception Jewish Enlightenment had played no role whatsoever. A pinch of French classicism was all he was prepared to acknowledge; the *species hollandia judaica* had been far too deeply rooted in Dutch mores to have embraced the *German* Haskalah.¹⁶

The next generation of historians, scarred by a war that Seeligmann had not lived to see, almost unanimously dismissed his idea of a typically Dutch form of Jewish life. The new paradigm, which was dominated by the work of Jozeph Michman (1914-2009), emphasized the Jewish essence of that Judaism, its connectedness to Jews around the world, with the Jewish Enlightenment, represented by Moses Mendelssohn and the Haskalah, as the driving force behind emancipation. ¹⁷ Michman, like Meijer, countered Seeligmann's idyll of unique reciprocity with a haunting image of the extreme adaptation and cultural alienation that came with obtaining civil rights. If emancipation had seemed like a logical step before the war, after 1945 it was exposed as an ironic error: Gothic turrets on a Corinthian building, as Michman chose to put it. It is worth pausing to take in the implications of the imagery.¹⁸ For Michman, too, 'real' Judaism was medieval, independent, energetic, vulnerable yet viable, aloof, and different. And so, he believed, it would always be. The Enlightenment could take the Jews out of the ghetto, but it could not take the ghetto out of the Jews. An anachronistic correction to modernity—such was Michman's metaphor for the nature of Dutch Jewry after 1796, the fateful consequences of which were only too familiar to his generation.

But those who looked beyond that one decisive year saw a different history. Rena Fuks-Mansfeld (1930–2012), for example, with her unparalleled command of the Amsterdam Jewish sources, pointed to an 'internal Dutch Jewish undercurrent of enlightened ideas', which took shape in the course of the eighteenth century in the form of a series of Yiddish-language publications. ¹⁹ She found an early breeding ground for

- ¹⁶ S. Seeligmann, 'Moses Mendelssohns invloed op de Nederlandse Joden', *BMGJWN* 2 (1925), 70–2; J. da Silva Rosa, 'Heeft Moses Mendelssohn invloed gehad op de Nederlandsche Joden?', *De Vrijdagavond*, 6 (1930), 346–7.
- ¹⁷ J. Michman, 'The Jewish Essence of Dutch Jewry', *DJH* ii. 1–22; id., 'The Impact of German Judaism on Dutch Jewry in the Nineteenth Century' (Heb.), in id. (ed.), *Studies on the History of Dutch Jewry*, vol. iv (Jerusalem, 1984), 27–43; id., 'Haskalah—but Orthodox', in id., *The History of Dutch Jewry during the Emancipation Period*, 1787–1815: *Gothic Turrets on a Corinthian Building* (Amsterdam, 1995), 158–83.
- ¹⁸ J. Michman, 'Gothische torens op een Corinthisch gebouw: De doorvoering der emancipatie der Joden in Nederland', *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis*, 89 (1976), 493–516, and the subsequent debate with Anton Huussen Jr. in *BMGN* 94 (1979), 75–83, and 96 (1981), 74–82.
- ¹⁹ R. G. Fuks-Mansfeld, 'Verlichting en emancipatie omstreeks 1750–1814', in J. C. H. Blom et al. (eds.), *Geschiedenis van de joden in Nederland* (Amsterdam, 1995), 177–203: 179.

those ideas in the printing workshop of *dayan* Moses ben Simon Frankfort (1672–1762) in Amsterdam. Another undisputed milestone was *She'eris yisroel*, a comprehensive survey of Jewish history up to 1743 by Menachem Man Amelander (1698–*c*.1749).²⁰ Whether one wishes to apply the predicate 'enlightened' to this set of rabbinic publications depends on one's definition of Jewish Enlightenment. Yet it most certainly was not the uninspired repetition of moves as postulated by David Ruderman. In the 1770s, the Berlin *maskilim* may have been the first to cross the threshold of the modern age; according to recent research, the run-up to that step had taken shape in Frankfort's workshop, where fifty years earlier a Jewish subdivision of the Republic of Letters had been founded.²¹ The book historian Shlomo Berger (1953–2015) has outlined how this initiative contributed to a new, *global* Ashkenazi identity.²² Simultaneously, his student Bart Wallet has shown that this new identity cannot be seen in isolation from its *local* Amsterdam context.²³

Dutch Jews or a people without borders? The complex balance between city and *kille* (congregation), between homeland and diaspora, runs like a connecting thread through Jewish history, through historical writing, and through this chapter. For like the Amsterdam Ashkenazim, the city's Portuguese Jews had moved effortlessly between different worlds, without the help of either Haskalah or Enlightenment. Connected to European culture by their New Christian past, to the Sephardi community by their commercial networks, and to Holland's boggy soil by their monumental synagogue and cemetery, they had developed into typical 'Port Jews', as open, cosmopolitan, and full of Amsterdam character as the port city where they had washed up a century earlier.²⁴ Yet in 1796 they had to choose—or, rather, the choice was made for them. How did that process evolve? And what were its implications for the early modern Jewish mentality? The following analysis will try to answer these, and other, related questions.

When reading this attempt, it will be good to keep in mind that the group affected by emancipation was by no means marginal. During the eighteenth century, the

- ²⁰ R. G. Fuks-Mansfeld, 'The Role of Yiddish in the Early Dutch-Jewish Haskalah', in S. Berger et al. (eds.) *Speaking Jewish—Jewish Speak: Multilingualism in Western Ashkenazi Culture* (= *StR* 36) (Leuven, 2002–3), 147–55. For Frankfort, see also Kaplan, Ch. 4 above; on *She'eris yisroel*, see B. T. Wallet, 'Links in a Chain: Early Modern Yiddish Historiography from the Northern Netherlands, 1743–1812' (doctoral thesis, University of Amsterdam, 2012), chs. 5 and 6, pp. 109–208.
- ²¹ S. Berger, 'Yiddish on the Borderline of Modernity: Language and Literature in Early Modern Ashkenazi Culture', *Simon-Dubnow-Institut Jahrbuch/Yearbook*, 6 (2007), 113–22; A. Bar-Levav, 'Amsterdam and the Inception of the Jewish Republic of Letters', in Y. Kaplan (ed.), *The Dutch Intersection: The Jews and the Netherlands in Modern History* (Leiden, 2008), 225–37.
- ²² S. Berger, 'Functioning within a Diaspora Third Space: The Case of Early Modern Yiddish', *Jewish Studies Quarterly*, 15 (2008), 68–86.
 ²³ Wallet, 'Links in a Chain', passim.
- ²⁴ For the Sephardi 'Port Jew' as a typological counterpart of the Ashkenazi 'court Jew' and *maskil*, see D. Sorkin, 'The Port Jew: Notes Toward a Social Type', *Journal of Jewish Studies*, 50/1 (1999), 87–97, and the essays in D. Cesarani, *Port Jews: Jewish Communities in Cosmopolitan Maritime Trading Centres*, 1550–1950 (London, 2002).

number of Jews had skyrocketed, especially in Amsterdam. Whereas some 3,000 Jews (mostly Portuguese) had been living in the city around 1650, by the time of the first official census in 1795 their number had grown to 24,000, including 20,000 Ashkenazim. And although the authors of the report were certain that they had overlooked individual souls amid 'the populousness of the Jewish quarter', we may nonetheless assume that Jews made up at least 10 per cent of the Amsterdam population.²⁵

In the colonies in the West, proportions were different. In 1788 the population of Surinam included 100 Jewish mulattoes and 1,311 'white Jews' (10 per cent of whom were *despachados*, impoverished Jews dispatched from Amsterdam), who constituted about a third of the social elite. ²⁶ Not long before, during the crisis of 1771–6, various plantation owners had left the Jodensavanne, an agricultural community with a historically Jewish population (PLATE 33), for Paramaribo, Curação, and even the United States. Among those hit by the crisis was the notary and coffee planter David de Isac Cohen Nassy (1747–1806), whose two-volume *Essai historique sur la colonie de Surinam* (1788) has proved invaluable in the modern reconstruction of early modern Surinamese history.

As a member of the cross-confessional literary society Docendo Docemur, Nassy was interested in all 'liberal arts and sciences', but especially in Enlightenment thought and its implications for the organization of the state.²⁷ In 1786, at his initiative, the society had read Christian Wilhelm von Dohm's recently published book *Über die bürgerliche Verbesserung der Juden* ('On the Civil Improvement of the Jews', 1781). Von Dohm's plea for universal equality had proved to be such a magnificent rebuttal of Voltaire's Enlightenment antisemitism that on 10 March of that year the members felt prompted to send a thank-you letter to Prussia. Discrimination on the grounds of religion and skin colour was a thorn in the flesh of the Surinamese Jews, however integrated they seemed to be into colonial society. In 1798, when Nassy addressed a treatise on equal rights to the governor-general of Surinam, Jurriaan de Friderici, he could not help observing that in 1795 the Batavian people should first have broken down their old prejudices before drawing up a new constitution. Without such a moral purge, Nassy wrote, they had done 'rien pour la justice, et pour l'humanité' ('nothing for

²⁵ T. Levie Bernfeld and B. T. Wallet, *Canon van 700 jaar joods Nederland* (Amsterdam, 2015), 107. By the time a second census was taken in 1808, there were 31,000 Jews living in the city, as compared to 1,871 in The Hague, 2,113 in Rotterdam, and somewhat over 14,000 in the remainder of the country.

²⁶ This figure comes from David Nassy's 'Essai historique' (1788), mentioned below. The percentage was calculated on the basis of R. Cohen, *Jews in Another Environment: Surinam in the Second Half of the Eighteenth Century* (Leiden, 1991), 25. On the forced migration of this disadvantaged group, see Kaplan, above, Ch. 4.

²⁷ J. Israel, 'Dutch Jews, David Nassy, and the "General Revolution" in the Caribbean (1770–1800)', in S. Berger, E. Schrijver, and I. Zwiep (eds.), *Mapping Jewish Amsterdam: The Early Modern Perspective. Dedicated to Yosef Kaplan on the Occasion of his Retirement* (= StR 44) (Leuven, 2012), 173–90. For Docendo Docemur and an overview of its members, see M. van Kempen, *Een geschiedenis van de Surinaamse literatuur, deel 3: De geschreven literatuur van 1596 tot 1923* (Paramaribo, 2002), 87–8.

justice or for humanity').²⁸ That was undoubtedly not how the Batavian politicians saw it at the time. Yet Nassy's conviction that emancipation had not been a humanitarian rubber-stamp decision appears, as we shall see, a very well-founded one.

Rebirth: Dutch Jewry and Citizenship, 1796–1814

On 2 September 1796 the National Assembly of the fledgling Batavian Republic (1795-1801; PLATE 34) ordained that from then on no Jew would ever 'be excluded from any rights or advantages pertaining to the Batavian Citizen'. 29 The decision was unanimous but had been preceded by intense debate. No fewer than thirty-one speakers had had their say on the real or imagined dual loyalties of their new fellow citizens, their support for the fugitive stadholder,30 their religious peculiarities and poor morals, and the threat they posed in an egalitarian trade and labour market—in short, the familiar elements of today's debate about integration. The inclusion of this point on the agenda had not been a spontaneous decision. Nearly six months earlier, on 29 March, 'some Jewish Citizens with the Right to Vote' had submitted an application in the hope of obtaining full civil rights, in addition to the right to vote they had already been awarded, that is, 'the same latitude in all things', as it was phrased in the National Assembly.³¹ The delegates were well aware that this fundamental right could never be granted to a collective, but only to the individual (the basic unit of society). Also, no distinction could be made between individuals on the grounds of 'any Religious feelings, whatever name they are given', just as the enlightened Netherlands would never allow for a privileged or dominant church. Viewed from this perspective, the Gelykstaat der Joden was the result of a consistently applied ideology of liberty and equality (PLATE 35), not of warm feelings of fraternity. With the benefit of hindsight and distance, David Nassy had definitely got it right.32

Earlier in this chapter, the political emancipation of the Jews in the Netherlands was described as an *événement*, a historical dividing line, a radical turning point in the way we perceive and act in the world. Yet Tirtsah Levie Bernfeld and Bart Wallet were right in pointing out that, for most Jews in the Republic, little changed in the short term. ³³ Historians have concentrated on the internal leadership crisis that followed

²⁸ David Nassy, *Lettre-politico-théologico-morale sur les Juifs* (Paramaribo, 1798), 138, quoted in Israel, 'Dutch Jews', 175.

²⁹ Dagverhaal der handelingen van de Nationale Vergadering representerende het Volk van Nederland en van de constituerende Vergadering representerende het Bataafsche Volk 1796–1798, vol. ii (The Hague, 1798), 61–2. For the ideal of equality in the Batavian Republic, see M. Rutjes, Door gelijkheid gegrepen: Democatie, burgerschap en staat in Nederland, 1795–1801 (Nijmegen, 2012).

³¹ Quotation from the Emancipation Decree as reproduced in Levie Bernfeld and Wallet, *Canon van 700 jaar joods Nederland*, 110.

³² For the intrinsically utilitarian dimension of 'philosemitism', see J. Karp and A. Sutcliffe, 'Introduction: A Brief History of Philosemitism', in eid. (eds.), *Philosemitism in History* (New York, 2011), 1–28.

³³ Levie Bernfeld and Wallet, Canon, 111.

the end of Jewish semi-autonomy, and we too will examine that clash in greater detail. But the full impact of emancipation on the average Jew, who, literally overnight, had become a not so average Dutch citizen, would emerge only gradually. The biblical covenant with his jealous God was replaced by a personal contract with the secular (i.e. Christian) authorities. The old complex of shared values, standards, rites, and symbols was reforged into a modern religion, and the borders of the *kille*, which had been taken for granted, gave way to a carefully constructed, partly self-made, new identity. You were born a Jew, but it took hard work to become an 'Israelite'—more about that in the next chapter, on the years 1814–70. ³⁴ Here we turn our attention to elite Jewish circles in Amsterdam, where the emancipation decree had almost immediately sparked a full-scale *querelle des anciens et des modernes*.

As in any process of change, we find a progressive and mostly young vanguard butting heads with the old, established order.³⁵ The critically minded emerging elite, united in a society known as Felix Libertate (1795–8), had been the driving force behind the March petition. The society's name was a sneer at Felix Meritis, the Amsterdam society for arts and sciences that refused to accept Jews among its members until 1862, and whose building on Keizersgracht, adorned with classical columns, would inspire Jozeph Michman's metaphor a century later. 36 Besides emancipation, internal democratization was another main goal of the new movement. The time seemed ripe for a revision of the statutes, influence over appointments and decisions, and an enlightened new direction. The parnasim and rabbis, however, thought otherwise, with the country's first Jewish schism as a result. In 1797 the Amsterdam Ashkenazi community split into an Alte Kille, where everything stayed as much the same as possible, and a Naye Kille, also known as Adas Yeshurun, which advocated administrative reform and social integration, but did not undertake radical religious reforms. It was not, in other words, an early Dutch precursor of the German Jewish Reform movement.³⁷ Yet interesting it was, not least because its aspirations brought to light the fundamental consequences of modern Jewish citizenship.

First of all there was the matter of inner-Jewish division, more than thirty years before the Reformed Church in the Netherlands would experience its first real schism (the Secession of 1834). In earlier times there had been occasional differences of opinion, but the Jewish 'nation' had always presented a unified front to the outside world. United they had supported the stadholder in his struggle with the Patriots. ³⁸ When the

³⁴ The classic study of this subject is B. T. Wallet's *Nieuwe Nederlanders: De integratie van de joden in Nederland* 1814–1851 (Amsterdam, 2007).

³⁵ For the resistance against that establishment, see S. Bloemgarten, 'De Amsterdamse joden gedurende de eerste jaren van de Bataafse Republiek (1795–1798)', *StR* 1/1 (1967), 67–96; 1/2 (1967), 45–71; 2/1 (1968), 66–88.

³⁶ See above, p. 176 and n. 18.

 $^{^{37}\ \}textit{Pace M. A. Meyer, Response to Modernity: A \textit{History of the Reform Movement in Judaism}} \ (\text{New York, 1988}), 25-7.$

³⁸ The patriots were of the same opinion, as shown by *Dagverhaal der Handelingen van de Nationale Vergadering*, ii. 496. For the Jewish stance in the struggle between the patriots and the Orangists, see below, pp. 193–4.

members of Felix Libertate were excommunicated by the nation's leaders for openly supporting the Patriotic cause, their ban had been standard procedure. Never before, however, had excommunicants formed a new congregation with their own synagogue, their own rabbi (the Swedish convert Isaac Graanboom (PLATE 37), who had been hired away from the Alte Kille), and their own cemetery, in Overveen.³⁹ In premodern times, the dividing lines between Jews had been drawn by the age-old combination of ethnicity, halakhah, and ritual, defined either in genealogical terms (once a Sephardi Jew, always a Sephardi Jew) or geographically (if the local *kille* was Ashkenazi, then so were you).⁴⁰ In 1797, in contrast, a contemporary *ideological* difference had triggered a new internal division. This reflected the penetration of a new factor—national politics—into the heart of the Dutch Jewish community, and it was no coincidence that this happened at the exact moment when the first Jews entered Dutch politics.

In September 1797 the medical doctor Hartog de Hartog De Lémon (1755–1823; PLATE 36) and former slave trader Hermanus Leonard Bromet (1724–1812) joined the second Constituent National Assembly, the Batavian equivalent of parliament. 41 De Lémon had earned his reputation as a physician to the poor in Amsterdam, the elderly Bromet as a merchant in Surinam, where Jews had belonged to the white elite and led less restricted lives than in the Republic. Inspired by the egalitarian rhetoric of Robespierre and Thomas Paine, they had launched a campaign against the establishment, operating at first out of Felix Libertate. They argued that the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen should be read in the synagogue, in Yiddish if necessary, and that the rabbinate should finally approve participation by Jews in the national militias, even if that seemed hard to reconcile with their sabbath rest. 42 Compared to their efforts within the Jewish community, their excursion into national politics was shortlived. A coup soon put an end to their radical Unitarian Party, and the two were removed from office in June 1798. The symbolic value of their curtailed political career was inversely proportional to its length. The Low Countries could pride themselves on a first: never before had Jews been allowed to serve the public interest at the national level—and so soon after their admission to civil society, and without additional legislation!43

³⁹ For Izaak Graanboom (1738–1807), see L. Fuks, 'De Zweedse familie Graanboom: Een Hebreeuwse familiegeschiedenis', *StR* 1 (1967), 85–93.

 $^{^{40}\,}$ J. Davis, 'The Reception of the Shulhan 'Arukh and the Formation of Ashkenazic Jewish Identity', AJS Review, 26/2 (2002), 251–76.

⁴¹ For De Lémon, see S. Bloemgarten, *Hartog de Hartog Lémon: Joodse revolutionair in Franse tijd* (Amsterdam, 2007); for Bromet, see B. T. Wallet, 'Bromet, Hermanus Leonard', in *Biografisch Woordenboek van Nederland*, http://resources.huygens.knaw.nl/bwn1780-1830/lemmata/data/Bromet.

⁴² Briev van H. L. Bromet [.] ten betooge dat de wapening der Jooden, zelfs op den Sabat, voor de vrijheid in den burgerstaat en de defensie van het land, volgens haare wetten, geoorloofd en geboden is (Amsterdam, 1795); Tweede briev van H. L. Bromet (Amsterdam, 1795).

⁴³ Compare for example the situation in the United Kingdom, where Jews were not allowed to enter parliament until the passage of the Jews Relief Act of 1858.

The transformation from a near-autonomous nation into citizens with a stake in public affairs was not only a giant leap in administrative terms; it also proved quite a balancing act in everyday life. For how to bring together the two parts of the new hyphenated identity? The rule of thumb proposed by Juda Leib Gordon (1830–92), that the modern Israelite should be 'a Jew at home and a man in the street', sounds plausible and has been embraced by many a historian as the template for Jewish modernity. But it does not take a genius to see that Gordon's principle relies heavily on the Enlightenment hope that Judaism could be reduced to a private religion. 'Assimilated' would never be synonymous with 'equal'. 'In the street' the Dutch Jews seemed to bring a 'residue' of Jewishness, visible, and vulnerable, to friend and enemy alike.44 The egalitarian public space was a myth, even if it was unreservedly embraced by the new Israelite elite. Keeping in mind the advice of the French Abbé Grégoire (1750–1831), who in the heat of the revolution had advocated the regeneration of the pre-modern Jews as modern citizens, they developed a 'neutral' public persona. It was felt as a moral duty no longer to 'differ from our compatriots in way of life, morals, and speech, to make them see that Israel is no reprobate, but that we can very well adjust our way of life and language to those of the country in which we live'. 45 When the Abbé visited Amsterdam in 1803, he met with Jews who could hardly be distinguished from 'real' Amsterdammers—a successful régénération physique, morale, et politique, as the title of his own treatise put it. A beneficial adaptation to Holland's habitus, culture, and political practices, Seeligmann would have said.46

One result of this rapid process of acculturation was the loss of internal pluriformity. The Jewish population of the early modern Republic had been a set of loosely affiliated communities, each rooted in local circumstances and displaying its own unique character. The next chapter will describe how, in the Kingdom of the Netherlands, that collage of local identities was shaped by higher authorities into a *Dutch* Israelite persona. In the years immediately following emancipation, however, the main source of pressure on Jewish diversity was the desire among the Jews themselves to merge seamlessly into a *universal* fraternity. This was not so much a matter of central policy as a corollary of their attempt to be enlightened citizens. As we shall see, the civil rebirth of the Dutch Jews levelled out their language and thought—and their religion,

⁴⁴ The fact that anti-Jewish caricatures grew increasingly grim and grotesque in response to ongoing acculturation is demonstrated by F. Wiesemann, 'Schöner ist doch unsereiner! Von der Allgegenwärtigkeit antijüdischer Gegenstande', in id., *Antijüdischer Nippes und populare Judenbilder': Die Sammlung Finkelstein* (Essen, 2005), II–20.

⁴⁵ Chanoch Lannangar Ngal Pie Darkooc, Bikkoere chinnoech (Amsterdam, 1809), p. ix.

⁴⁶ H. B. Grégoire, *Essai sur la régéneration physique, morale et politique des juifs* (Metz, 1789); for the concept of *régéneration*, see A. Goldstein Sepinwall, *The Abbé Grégoire and the French Revolution: The Making of Modern Universalism* (Berkeley, 2005), ch. 4; for the reception among Dutch Jews, see R. Hermon-Belot, 'The Abbé Grégoire's Program for the Jews: Social Reform and Spiritual Project', in J. D. Popkin and R. H. Popkin (eds.), *The Abbé Grégoire and His World*, Archives Internationales d'Histoire des Idées, 169 (Dordrecht, 2000), 13–27: 20.

which on paper was the only remnant of what had once been a comprehensive, largely implicit Jewish identity.

One illustration of this process of levelling was the membership of Felix Libertate. Amsterdam had always been home to two separate 'Jewish Nations', the elder Portuguese (Sephardi) and the younger—and by this stage far larger—Ashkenazi.⁴⁷ In the context of 'Felix', the old dividing lines lost their meaning. Ashkenazim constituted the majority, as they did in the general population, but they made common cause with their Portuguese brethren when the general Jewish interest was at stake. Conversely, the Portuguese Jews made the fraternal gesture of giving up their traditional snobbery towards their Ashkenazi neighbours, an attitude that had been expressed in pointed terms as recently as 1762 in Isaac de Pinto's Apologie pour la nation juive ('Apologia for the Jewish Nation'). In all this, the support of a handful of non-Jewish members was essential; a society operating in the public sphere should avoid creating the impression of representing a religious denomination. Felix's ideology, too, showed more affinity with the ideals of the Dutch Enlightenment, with its emphasis on fraternity and civilization, than with the secular emancipation-through-education agenda of the Berlin Haskalah. 48 The Latin name reflected the society's outlook: Happiness through Freedom—the Enlightenment agenda in a nutshell.

A second example of the acculturation process was the way in which the Batavian Jews chose to stage their new public voice. Their emancipation had come at a time when the social foundations of Europe had been radically overturned. The aplomb of the nobility had been swept away by a self-confident, critical citizenry; the hereditary responsibility of the aristocracy had made way for individual accountability. One major forum for this new culture of accountability was the public sphere, a continual open debate in which not only specialists but also laypeople were invited to air their opinions on political, social, artistic, and scientific matters. Coffeehouses, learned societies, and salons formed the backdrop to their conversation, which was often continued in the columns of newspapers and magazines. ⁴⁹ As fully-fledged citizens from 1796 onwards, Dutch Jews were welcome—at least in theory—to take part in this omnipresent dialogue. They therefore felt no immediate need for a distinctive Jewish voice, nor a separate niche, in the new public sphere.

Conversely, issues of Jewish religion were deemed of little public relevance. Such

⁴⁷ According to the 1795 census, more than 20,000 of the circa 24,000 Amsterdam Jews belonged to the Ashkenazi community; Levie Bernfeld and Wallet, *Canon*, 107.

⁴⁸ In earlier historical paradigms, the Haskalah was seen as the pivot of *all* Jewish modernization in Europe. Recent research, by contrast, also emphasizes the importance of local factors and processes. The main differences between the Jewish Enlightenment agendas in the French Netherlands and in Berlin are elucidated in I. E. Zwiep, 'Jewish Enlightenment (almost) without Haskalah: The Dutch Example', *Jewish Culture and History*, 13/2–3 (2012), 220–34, and see below, pp. 195–9.

⁴⁹ J. Habermas, Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit: Untersuchungen zu einer Kategorie der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft (Neuwied, 1962).

questions were better addressed internally, in short-lived pamphlets written in one of the Jewish languages. This was the approach taken to the conflict between the Naye and the Alte Kille. Once the divorce had been sealed, the two parties went on bickering about preserving tradition and welcoming progress for months, in a series of pamphlets totalling more than 500 pages.⁵⁰ These Diskursn fun di naye un di alte kille (1797–8) reveal the contours of the Jewish niche in the new realm of public debate. They had been prompted by an incident within the community, which did not require any long-term external infrastructure. The conversation remained within the limits of the Jewish language and community and was accessible to everyone in that community although the members of the Naye Kille were less than charmed with the vulgar Amsterdam yehudes (Yiddish). 51 Furthermore, the closed, tight-knit culture of the Jewish community lent itself to virulent ad hominem attacks. Epithets such as drunkard, diner fam penis (slave to the phallus), hypocrite, desecrator of religion, and atheist were frequently slung. The subject matter, tone, and style of this internal discussion had little in common with enlightened Dutch debate; rather, they hark back to the conventions of early eighteenth-century Dutch satire. This tells us something, incidentally, about the degree of Jewish acculturation before 1796, an observation that may be of some relevance to the final section of this chapter.

A very different atmosphere prevailed in the stylish literary society Tot Nut en Beschaving (For Good and Civilization), founded in 1807 by the Berlin émigré Tsvi Hirsch Somerhausen (1781–1853).⁵² Like Felix, the society's name did not hint at its Jewish origin, and members of other religions were emphatically invited to join, if only to 'prevent . . . it from becoming an Israelite society'.⁵³ In keeping with the spirit of the age, its members devoted themselves to producing and discussing art, science, and so-called 'moral civilization', a typical mixture of *politesse* and fraternal morality that dominated Dutch Enlightenment discourse.⁵⁴ Their chosen language was 'the most excellent [Dutch] mother tongue'; their topics were abstract issues such as toleration and self-esteem, the distinction between adverbs and adjectives, and the arduous task of the translator.⁵⁵

- ⁵⁰ For an edition with an introduction and translation, see J. Michman and M. Aptroot, *Storm in the Community: Yiddish Polemical Pamphlets of Amsterdam Jewry*, 1797–1798 (Cincinnati, 2002).
- ⁵¹ See the quasi-enlightened *Gedachtens fun philanthropos* in *Diskurs* 14 of the Naye Kille, which had supposedly been translated from German into Yiddish; Michman and Aptroot, *Storm in the Community*, 244–51; quotation at 244–5.
- ⁵² For Somerhausen's Belgian period, see B. T. Wallet, 'Belgian Independence, Orangism, and Jewish Identity: The Jewish Communities in Belgium during the Belgian Revolution', in J. Frishman et al. (eds.), Borders and Boundaries in and around Dutch Jewish History (Amsterdam, 2011), 167–82.
- ⁵³ Quotation from A. J. A. M. Hanou, *De sluiers van Isis: Johannes Kinker als voorvechter van de Verlichting, in de Vrijmetselarij en andere Nederlandse genootschappen* (Deventer, 1988), i. 463.
- ⁵⁴ R. A. M. Aerts and W. E. Krul, 'Van hoge beschaving tot brede cultuur, 1780–1940', in P. den Boer (ed.), Beschaving: Een geschiedenis van de begrippen hoofsheid, heusheid, beschaving en cultuur (Amsterdam, 2001), 213–54.
 - 55 The last two items on the list were award-winning essay competition entries, one by Moses Lemans

These themes may not seem especially urgent, but the methodology was very much of its time. The objective of these activities was to sharpen the faculty of reason and to find the universal in the particular, the general rule behind the individual case. All this was modelled after the famous Maatschappij tot Nut van 't Algemeen (Society for the Public Good), which, Enlightenment or no, had not seen fit to count the Jews among the Public. In this light, Somerhausen's initiative was thus a textbook example of what Ahad Ha'am in 1893 would call 'assimilation by imitation'. For Around 1800 it was called *régénération*: a complete rebirth as modern Batavian citizens, assimilated in virtually every respect.

The publications of Tot Nut en Beschaving never mention such a thing as Judaism. The study of the Torah, Talmud, and Zohar, the hard core of the traditional canon, was left to the *beit midrash* and to the theological society Reshit Chokhmah (The Beginning of Wisdom, Proverbs 1: 7), founded in 1813 to counterbalance the universalist turn.⁵⁷ It is worth noting that this was not a departure from previous trends; in the eighteenth century, too, religious and secular societies had coexisted side by side. It does, however, confirm the sharp new line drawn between public and private roles, which is also illustrated by the use of Dutch and Hebrew respectively as the vernaculars of the two societies. The most drastic consequences of the privatization of Jewish religion, however, concern its internal organization and the existing power structures, whose roots went back to the seventeenth century.

This inner turmoil became manifest in 1808, when King Louis Napoleon (of the new Kingdom of Holland that had succeeded the Batavian Commonwealth) decided to intervene in Jewish affairs (Plate 38). Such outside intervention was certainly called for. The social integration of the Jews proved a difficult process, and its proper course remained a matter of profound disagreement. Many *parnasim* and rabbis still would not fully acknowledge that the 'Jewish Nation' had been abolished and their semi-autonomous *kehilah*, once the social, legal, and cultural home ground of every Jew, had been reduced to a mere religious denomination. ⁵⁸ Louis Napoleon obviously took a different stance, from which he arrived at a few well-defined conclusions.

In the course of the year 1808, he not only reversed the schism between the Alte and the Naye Kille, but also founded the Opperconsistorie (Upper Consistory), a central Jewish administration falling directly under the national authorities, analogous to the French Consistoire Central. Chaired by the lawyer Jonas Daniël Meijer (1780–1834;

(1785–1832), 'Verhandeling over het kenmerkend onderscheid tusschen de adjectiva en adverbia', in *Werken van het Letteroefenend Genootschap Tot Nut en Beschaving*, vol. i (Amsterdam, 1821), 11–25, the other by Samuel Mulder (1792–1860), 'Verhandeling over de kunst van het vertalen', in *Werken*, vol. ii (Amsterdam, 1825), 103–70.

⁵⁶ Ahad Ha'am (Asher Ginzberg), 'Chiqquy we-hitbollelut', in L. Simon (ed. and trans.), *Selected Essays* (New York, 1970), 71–5.

⁵⁷ D. A. Broeks, Resjiet Chochma: Een Amsterdams genootschap in de 19e eeuw (BA diss., University of Amsterdam, 2014), based on MS Ros. 372.

⁵⁸ J. Michman, The History of Dutch Jewry during the Emancipation Period, 105–57.

PLATE 39), one of the more progressive members of the Alte Kille, the Opperconsistorie was charged with implementing 'enlightened' policies in the eleven consistorial synagogues and the smaller congregations under their jurisdiction. The new system was not a success. The traditional elite kept sabotaging it, and the Sephardim even managed to escape the authority of Meijer and his associates altogether. Their special status was normalized to some extent in 1810, when the Netherlands were annexed into the First French Empire, and the four new 'integrated' consistories of Amsterdam, Leeuwarden, Rotterdam, and Zwolle briefly fell under Paris. Yet when French rule came to an end in 1813, central authority was once again industriously undermined from all sides.⁵⁹

In retrospect, Louis Napoleon's resolution of the Ashkenazi feud was his most abiding success in Jewish affairs. His plan for military duty for the Jews (which in 1809 was both an emancipatory and a pragmatic gesture, as the French war machine was in dire need of fresh troops) fizzled out, despite the support of the rabbinate. The Jewish Bible translation, begun by Royal Decree under the auspices of the Upper Consistory and henceforth required by law in the Jewish schools and synagogues, never went beyond the Pentateuch; the rabbis, with the exception of the progressive Samuel Berenstein (1767–1838; Plate 40), simply refused to adopt it. Nor was any major progress made in education between 1806 and 1810.

That lack of progress cannot be ascribed to the members of the society Chanoch Lannangar Ngal Pie Darkoo ('Train up a child in the way he should go'; Proverbs 22: 6), who were charged with translating the Enlightenment ideals for the intellectual grasp of young pupils, again under the authority of the Upper Consistory.⁶² Their efforts resulted in two short publications, deliberately printed in cheap editions to encourage wide distribution: *Bikkure chinnukh* ('First Fruits of Education', 1809), compiled by Moses Cohen Belinfante (1761–1838) and his colleagues, and *Yesodot ha-miqra of Hebreeuwsch spel- en leesboekje* ('Hebrew Spelling and Reading Book', 1810) by Tsvi Hirsch Somerhausen. The authors followed the pedagogical guidelines of the 'praiseworthy society Tot Nut van het Algemeen' and used the official Siegenbeek spelling of 1804.⁶³

⁵⁹ For the Opperconsistorie and the aftermath, see J. Michman, 'De stichting van het Opperconsistorie (1808): Een keerpunt in de geschiedenis van de Nederlandse Joden', *StR* 18 (1984), 41–60, 143–58; 19 (1985), 127–58; Wallet, *Nieuwe Nederlanders*, 18–23; Levie Bernfeld and Wallet, *Canon*, 117.

⁶⁰ The support from religious leaders should not come as a surprise. As far back as 1781, a formal agreement had been made between the Admiralties and the Ashkenazi chief rabbi Saul Levi that entitled Jews to serve in the VOC fleet. According to the *Middelburgsche Courant* of 28 Aug. 1781, no fewer than a thousand Jews had signed up as crewmen; E. van Biema, 'Het Nederlandsche zeewezen en de Amsterdamsche Joden in het einde der 18de eeuw', *Amsterdamsch Jaarboekje* (1901), 76–91.

- ⁶¹ J. Michman, H. Beem, and D. Michman, *Pinkas: Geschiedenis van de joodse gemeenschap in Nederland* (Amsterdam, 1992), 73.
- ⁶² D. Michman, 'Jewish Education in the Early Nineteenth Century: From Independence to Government Supervision' (Heb.), in *Studies on the History of Dutch Jewry*, vol. ii (1979), 89–138.
 - ⁶³ Bikkure chinnukh, v. Translating from Hebrew into the new spelling was felt to be difficult, as shown by

By opting for the Dutch language, they were siding *against* the 'outdated, vulgar, misshapen' Yiddish and *with* the new ideal of citizenship.⁶⁴ Their interest in Hebrew was mainly inspired by their desire to preserve the old religion for a new generation. In practice, the emphasis lay not so much on religious education (which tended towards enlightened *Verinnerlichung*) as on 'moral edification', the teaching of everything from civic duties to everyday table manners. Just how anthropocentric their approach was becomes clear from the short sample word list in *Bikkure chinnukh*, which, in an emphatic departure from the long-standing school tradition, starts not with God, but with his human creatures and their outward characteristics.⁶⁵

Once again assimilation was achieved through imitation, a process comparable to what is known in postcolonial terminology as mimicry, although the influence of the Haskalah can also be discerned. Soon after the publication of *Bikkure chinnukh*, the cofounder of Chanoch Lannangar, Moses Lemans (1785–1832), hastened to have a copy sent to Berlin, remarking that the Jews in the Low Countries had finally begun to develop an up-to-date religious and secular programme of education for their children. But even if by international standards the members of Chanoch Lannangar were trailing behind, in their own circles they were trailblazers. Precisely how, and in what context, the more traditional *melamdim* (teachers) were expected to use their new materials remains unclear; Amsterdam, unlike Berlin, had no modern *jüdische Freischule*. In 1817, when, after seven years, Somerhausen took a fresh look at the state of Jewish education, he observed that the old method of 'imposing' had been replaced by the new method of 'nudging', and that 'the consuming flame of a forced Enlightenment [had] lit the gentler torch of moderate illumination'. 67

Navigating between non-Jewish structures and Jewish standards, between local stimuli and the dynamics of diaspora, is a constant in Jewish history, and the period 1796–1814 was no exception. While a small number of 'early adopters' was increasingly rooted in Dutch civil society and even took responsibility by standing for political office, to the silent majority the old 'deterritorialized' identity felt at least as relevant. ⁶⁸ In the year when the members of Chanoch Lannangar launched their *Bikkure chinnukh*, Hirschel Lehren (1784–1853) and Abraham Prins established Pekidim ve-Amarcalim, a charitable organization that would grow into an international philanthropic network fostering the Jewish communities in Palestine. ⁶⁹ Jaap Meijer has characterized

H. Somerhausen, Hebreeuws spel- en leesboekje voor eerstbeginnenden (Amsterdam, 1810), 'Voorrede van den schrijver', 7.

⁶⁴ For these characterizations and others, see M. Lemans, *Gebeden der Nederlandsche Israëliten voor het geheele jaar, naar de Hoogduitsche liturgie of ritus* (Amsterdam, 1822), pp. xvi–xvii.

⁶⁵ Bikkure chinnukh, 1–2.

⁶⁶ M. Lemans, 'A Letter from the Chanoch Lannanger ngal pie Darkoo Society' (Heb.), *Ha-Meassef*, 8 (1809), 188–90.

⁶⁷ Z. H. Somerhausen, 'Vertoog over de opvoeding', in Werken van het Letteroefenend Genootschap Tot Nut en Beschaving, vol. i (Amsterdam, 1821), 99–130: 130.

⁶⁸ Compare Kaplan, above, Ch. 4.

⁶⁹ Levie Bernfeld and Wallet, Canon, 119.

Lehren's work as 'Romanticism without Réveil',⁷⁰ but it would be more apt to speak of a centripetal force, of the urge to strengthen familiar ties in a world unhinged. If the simultaneous existence of the two initiatives proves anything, it is that it is impossible to draw a straight line from 2 September 1796 to 30 November 1813, the day when William of Orange landed on the beach at Scheveningen to found 'his' Kingdom of the Netherlands. For most Dutch Jews, modernity arrived in fits and starts, and above all in many, often contradictory, guises.

Steps towards Jewish renewal in the shadow of the Enlightenment—that would be a fair summary of the developments described above. With equality defined in terms of fraternity, emancipation soon became synonymous with naturalization, with seamless integration into the Enlightenment family (instead of signifying the struggle for equality in diversity, as it would in nineteenth-century Germany).⁷¹ The 'reborn' identity was marked by a pronounced public–private duality which, though somewhat tempered in later years, would never quite disappear. The pre-modern nation and the Jewish 'residue' were carefully tucked away in an Israelite *religious* denomination, centrally governed and rooted in a shared ideal of moral civilization. The Jewish vernaculars, too, were banished from the public domain, with varying success, in favour of Dutch—with a dispensation for Hebrew, which like Yiddish came under increasing pressure as the nineteenth century progressed.⁷²

Local Osmosis: 1750–1796

The above account of emancipation through regeneration makes Seeligmann's belief in the *species hollandia judaica* perhaps a little easier to understand. But with a new elite at the wheel and the establishment hitting the brakes, and with the Enlightenment, the Haskalah, and the pre-modern mindset as a variable compass, the Batavian Jewish trajectory was a good deal more complex than Seeligmann's linear model suggests. It is time, therefore, that we return to the question of whether this process was an evolution, or perhaps a revolution after all? Should we set stock by the fact that emotions ran high and, like Shmuel Feiner, identify 1796 as the start of a lasting Jewish *Kulturkampf*? Or was it the tail end of the early modern erosion of rabbinical authority and the gradual shift in boundaries between Christianity and Judaism?⁷³ To answer this question, let us turn to the decades leading up to the granting of civil rights. While

⁷⁰ In ch. 3 of his Erfenis der Emancipatie, 21–30.

⁷¹ For the rich history of the cliché that Jews should earn their place in society, see J. Cohen and R. I. Cohen (eds.), *The Jewish Contribution to Civilization: Reassessing an Idea* (Oxford, 2008).

 $^{^{72}}$ I. E. Zwiep, 'Hebrew, Yiddish, Dutch: Language Theory, Language Ideology and the Emancipation of 19th-Century Dutch Jewry', StR $_{34}$ /I (2000), 156–74; B. T. Wallet, '"End of the Jargon-Scandal": The Decline and Fall of Yiddish in the Netherlands (1796–1886)', *Jewish History*, 20 (2006), 333–48.

⁷³ Ruderman, Early Modern Jewry, chs. 3 and 4, pp. 133–90.

'1796' certainly was an *événement*, such a big event, as mentioned earlier, rarely comes out of the blue.

Chapter 4 describes how in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries Jewish migrants from various backgrounds had settled within the borders of the Republic.⁷⁴ Obviously the Dutch horizon did not mark the limits of their world; the deterritorialized newcomers also cherished lasting memories of their countries of origin. Evelyne Oliel-Grausz has aptly characterized the Sephardi diaspora as a *migration de maintien*, a form of mobility that, unlike the *migration de rupture*, maintains a strong connection to its origins, the hub from which a tight web is spun of economic, cultural, and institutional links.⁷⁵ The more than 5,000 letters sent to contacts around the world that the Mahamad kept in their *copiador de cartas* from 1702 onwards illustrate the vital reality of their far-flung 'Portuguese' network.

The Ashkenazim likewise maintained transnational contacts, although they tended to forge their alliances closer to home. Those who valued high-quality instruction sent their sons to yeshivas in historic centres of Jewish life, such as Frankfurt, Metz, or Prague. He was taken for granted that the son and grandson of Chief Rabbi Aryeh Leib ben Shaul Löwenstamm (*c.*1690–1755, born in Kraków) would go to the academy in their home country of Poland. This reinforced the old division between the original German and later eastern European branches of Jewry—later termed Ashkenaz I and II by Max Weinreich in his history of the Yiddish language—within the unified Amsterdam congregation. Research

Yet we should not forget that, with only two 'Jewish Nations', the demographics of Jewish Amsterdam were straightforward by the standards of the time. By comparison, from the seventeenth century onwards Venice harboured three Jewish denominations, Safed (a centre of Jewish mysticism) twelve, and the Greek port of Salonika (Thessaloniki) more than thirty, with names that revealed their geographical origins down to the square kilometre. Katallan Yashan, Sicilia Chadash, Mallorca Sheni—such a degree of fragmentation was inconceivable in Amsterdam. Of course, Amsterdam's Jews, too, remained faithful to their roots and showed solidarity with their own diaspora. At the same time, however, they slowly but steadily became part of the fabric of their city. 'Mir Amsterdamerz'—with those words Zalman ben Moses Prinz addressed the readers of his Yiddish Kronik.'79' Unzere medines' was the phrase used by Bendit Wing for the Low

⁷⁴ Kaplan, above, Ch. 4.

⁷⁵ E. Oliel-Grausz, 'Networks and Communication in the Sephardi Diaspora: An Added Dimension to the Concept of Port Jews and Port Jewries', *Jewish History and Culture*, 7/1-2 (2004), 61-7.

⁷⁶ Wallet, 'Links in a Chain', 80–1.

⁷⁷ Michman et al., *Pinkas*, 62.

⁷⁸ For the early modern emotional value of Ashkenaz as a geographical term, see Davis, 'The Reception of the Shulhan 'Arukh', 265–8. On Yiddish, see M. Weinreich, *History of the Yiddish Language*, trans. S. Noble, ed. P. Glaser (New Haven, 2008).

⁷⁹ Prinz, Kronik min shnas takmad 'ad shnas takmach, MS Ros. 19 D 36, fo. 3"; Wallet, 'Links in a Chain', 229.

Countries in his *Lezikorn*, which chronicled the turbulent years between 1795 and 1812.⁸⁰ Alongside the traditional Jewish 'we', a new, local Jewish 'we' had come into being, one that was strikingly inclusive *and* received the wholehearted endorsement of more than a few Christians.

This endorsement stands in need of some qualification, however, for on further examination the Dutch gentile 'we' appears to have been limited to 'onze smousen', 'our yids' only. Newcomers from eastern Europe who roamed the Seven Provinces begging and selling odds and ends, with one foot in the world of crime, were barred from the Republic by order of the States General.⁸¹ By contrast, the widespread appreciation of the established Jewish population led to new opportunities for settlement—as in the city of Utrecht, for example, where from 1789 onwards Jewish merchants were no longer required to leave the city after the closing of the market.⁸² The decision to allow Jews to become postmen was an even greater vote of confidence, even if in 1782 such a step still required considerable debate.⁸³

That the Jewish presence was felt to be an integral part of the local scenery also becomes apparent from the local and regional press of the time. In the *Middelburgsche Courant* of 13 June 1780 we read that one Izaak Abrahams of Gouda had died at the hale and hearty old age of 102, 'having observed the Jewish Religion with great devotion, not missing a single Service until the very end of his life, and in full possession of all his senses'. And when Levie Hartog Glogau was appointed rabbi of Groningen ten years later, the subscribers to the *Ommelander Courant* were even treated to a summary of his first sermon. To the delight of all, the new rabbi showed himself to be as well informed about the Groningen area as he was about the Babylonian Talmud. The newspaper further described how Glogau 'sang the Praises of Groningen, its fresh air, splendour, and beautiful location, and everything he had noticed on his journey there, as well as the blessed Liberty enjoyed by the Jews'.⁸⁴

For the Jews, in their turn, there was little opportunity to evade the many public days of fasting, thanksgiving, prayer, and celebration. Whether gladly or reluctantly, they were exposed on such occasions to what is now known as *civil religion*, the link between religion and politics which, often through an appeal to ritual and folklore, has been used throughout human history to create public unity. And this approach was successful, one might add; there is evidence that such events were regarded as not to be missed. In the Portuguese-Israelite archives, all invitations to occasions of fasting,

⁸⁰ MS Ros. 74-I; Wallet, 'Links in a Chain', 235.

⁸¹ Middelburgsche Courant, 11 Sept. 1770; see also Levie Bernfeld and Wallet, Canon, 103.

⁸² 'Artikelen waarop aan de jooden [.] het recht van inwoning binnen de stad Utrecht zal worden vergunt (Utrecht, 1789)', *Nieuwe Nederlandsche Jaarboeken*, 24 (1789), 416–17, 547–53.

⁸³ Missive van een Heer te Gorinchem, aan een vriend te Amsterdam, Wegens het aanstellen van Israëlitische Post-Boodens, Boven en behalven de reets aangestelde Staate Boodens, Van 's Hage, visa versa, op 's Hertogenbosch (n.p., 1782).

thanksgiving, and prayer received by the congregation in the years 1741–94 have been carefully preserved to the present day.⁸⁵

And so, despite immigration, explosive population growth, and poverty, a process of cultural osmosis took place. By now, the chief milestones in that process are well known. Be We know that around 1,700 Portuguese Jewish households gave up their nostalgic majolica tableware and adopted the omnipresent blue Delftware. We know that in 1732 the leaders of the Ashkenazi congregation succeeded in barring the then fashionable crinoline from the synagogue—as being licentious—but that their proposed ban on wigs was rejected. We know that the sabbath melodies sung in the Esnoga closely resembled the Baroque Maria motets performed on Sundays in the Christian church across the square. We know that the Jewish elite could be spotted regularly at the Amsterdamse Schouwburg (the city's main theatre), and that the makeshift Yiddish theatres not only staged Purim plays but also adaptations of popular Dutch theatre pieces. We know that Jewish authors drew on Dutch models, in writings that ranged from the *Diskursn* (in which the members of the Alte and Naye Kille berated each other after 1796), to Jacob Maarssen's *Shayne artliche geshichten* (1710), which was based on a Dutch translation of Boccaccio's *Decameron*. Decameron.

In this process of translation, it was inevitable that Amsterdam Yiddish would grow closer to Amsterdam Dutch. In the foreword to his *Geshichten*—whose very title shows signs of Dutch influence in its spelling—Maarssen explained that he had expurgated numerous 'Hollandisms' so that he could bring the book to the international market.⁹³

- ⁸⁵ P. T. van Rooden, 'Dissenters en bededagen: Civil religion ten tijde van de Republiek', *BMGN* 107 (1992), 703–12: 705–6, in response to R. G. Fuks-Mansfeld, *De Sefardim van Amsterdam tot 1795: Aspecten van een Joodse minderheid in een Hollandse stad* (Hilversum, 1989), 190–1.
- ⁸⁶ One illustration of the population explosion: in 1783 the physician Maarten Houttuyn noted that he could hardly believe 'how many people live underground in deep cellars and narrow corridors, yes, even in basements'; in *Bedenkingen over de sterflykheid en het getal des volks, te Amsterdam in vergelyking met andere plaatsen* (Amsterdam, 1783), 5.
- ⁸⁷ T. Levie Bernfeld, 'Matters Matter: Material Culture of Dutch Sephardim (1600–1750)', in Berger et al. (eds.), *Mapping Jewish Amsterdam*, 191–216: 213–14.
- ⁸⁸ T. Rädecker, Schuld en Boete in Joods Amsterdam: Kerktucht bij de Hoogduitse joodse gemeente 1737–1764 (Amsterdam, 2012), 48–51.
- ⁸⁹ I. Adler, Musical Life and Traditions of the Portuguese Jewish Community of Amsterdam in the XVIIIth Century (Jerusalem, 1974); E. Seroussi, 'The Ancient Modernity of the Liturgical Music of the Portuguese Synagogue in Amsterdam', in A. van der Heide and I. E. Zwiep (eds.), Jewish Studies and the European Academic World, Collection de la Revue des Études Juives (Paris, 2005), 15–21.
 - 90 H. Berg, 'Jiddisch theater in Amsterdam in de achttiende eeuw', StR 26 (1992), 10-37: 30-3.
 - ⁹¹ See above, pp. 180–1.
- ⁹² M. Aptroot, "I know this book of mine will cause offence": A Yiddish Adaptation of Boccaccio's *Decameron* (Amsterdam, 1710)', *Zutot: Perspectives on Jewish Culture*, 3 (2003), 152–9; see also Kaplan, above, Ch. 4.
- ⁹³ M. Aptroot, 'Dutch Impact on Amsterdam Yiddish Prints', in D. Katz (ed.), *Dialects of the Yiddish Language: Winter Studies in Yiddish*, vol. ii (*Language & Communication* 8, Supplement, 1988), 7–11: 11. For later developments, see ead., 'Yiddish, Dutch, German among Late 18th-century Amsterdam Jewry', in J. Israel and

Nor should it come as a surprise that the local Dutch gained ground as the chosen language of the Jewish elite. In 1789 the Sephardi society Concordia Crescimus, the literary home base of young Isaac da Costa, resolved henceforth to convene in Dutch. ⁹⁴ Two years later, its sister society in The Hague, Talmidei Tsaddik, published its first translation of the *Gebeeden der Portugeesche Joden* ('Prayers of the Portuguese Jews'). ⁹⁵ The earliest Dutch version of the Ashkenazi *siddur* (prayer-book), written by the abovementioned Moses Lemans, was not published until thirty years later, with the support of King William I's rigorous language policy. ⁹⁶

There was thus no language barrier to keep the Amsterdam Jews from identifying with their city. This is perhaps best observed in the Jewish chronicles from the period 1752–1812, which have been preserved in manuscript. The earliest, *Ayn naye kornayk fun 1740–1752* by the typesetter Abraham Chaim ben Tsvi Hirsch Braatbard (1699–1786), provides a clear impression of the genre. The starting point of this New Chronicle was 1740, the year in which Menachem Man Amelander had let his *She'eris yisroel* (of 1743) end. On the subject was that of Amelander's final chapter: the local interplay of Jewish and non-Jewish history and current affairs. The dedication of a new synagogue on the Houtgracht and the demise of the stadholder, Prince William IV, provided a fitting conclusion to the year 1752. A historian like Le Roy Ladurie no doubt would have dismissed Braatbard's account as tedious *histoire immobile*. But Braatbard himself knew better. Azo lang di welt wert sthen, wert nit wider azo ayn tzayt kumn' (As long as the world exists, no time like this will ever come again) he assured his readers. The sense of living at a unique point in history is apparently timeless, as is the blurring of the boundaries between the chronicler and the journalist.

The same ingredients—indebtedness to Amelander, a focus on Amsterdam, loyalty

R. Salverda (eds.), Dutch Jewry: Its History and Secular Culture (1500–2000) (Leiden, 2002), 201–11, and A. D. Zwiers, Kroniek van het Jiddisj: Taalkundige Aspecten van het achttiende-eeuws Nederlands Jiddisj (Delft, 2003).

- ⁹⁴ For the activities of this literary society (rederijkerskamer), see Meijer, Isaac da Costa's weg naar het Christendom, ch. 1.
- ⁹⁵ For this project, see S. W. Baron, 'Moses Cohen Belinfante: A Leader of Dutch-Jewish Enlightenment', *Historia Judaica*, 5 (1943), 1–35: 4–5.
- ⁹⁶ See Wallet, below, Ch. 6. For the vibrant associational life in the Jewish community, see P. Buijs, 'Tot nut en eer van 't jodendom: Joodse genootschappen in Nederland, 1738–1846', in H. Berg (ed.), *De gelykstaat der joden: Inburgering van een minderheid* (Zwolle, 1996), 15–24.
- ⁹⁷ For 'the city' as the main point of reference in early modern civic identity, see M. R. Prak, 'The Dutch "City Republics": Guilds, Militias, and Civic Politics', in L. Lucassen and W. Willems (eds.), *Living in the City: Urban Institutions in the Low Countries*, 1200–2010 (Abingdon, 2012), 46–62.
- ⁹⁸ L. Fuks and R. G. Fuks-Mansfeld, 'Joodse geschiedschrijving in de Republiek in de 17e and 18e eeuw', *StR 6* (1972), 137–65. A detailed follow-up study of the Yiddish material can be found in Wallet, 'Links in a Chain', ch. 7, pp. 211–77.
 - 99 Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana, Amsterdam, MS Ros. 486; Wallet, 'Links in a Chain', 216–23.
 - ¹⁰⁰ For She'eris yisroel, see also Kaplan, above, Ch. 4.
 - ¹⁰¹ See above, n. 6.

102 Quoted from Wallet, 'Links in a Chain', 217.

to the House of Orange, and pride in the Jewish infrastructure—are present in the work of Kosman ben Josef Baruch, who in 1771 did not write a chronicle of his own but simply updated a reissue of *She'eris yisroel*. ¹⁰³ Yet not only Ashkenazim drew inspiration from the popular 'Amsterdam *Yosipon'*. When Kosman ben Josef was working on his chapter, David Franco Mendes (1713–92) wrote a Portuguese equivalent titled *Memorias do estabelecimento e progresso dos Judeos Portuguezes e Espanhoes nesta famosa cidade de Amsterdam* (1769–72). ¹⁰⁴ Ten years later, he documented the rich history of Sephardi liturgy in the Hebrew-language *Kol tefilah vekol zimrah*. ¹⁰⁵ By then his biographical sketches of local heroes (including Menasseh ben Israel and Orobio de Castro) had appeared in the experimental Berlin magazine *Hame'asef* ('The Gatherer').

In a footnote, 73-year-old Franco Mendes told his readers he was thinking of writing an encyclopedia, in which 'the definition, origin and development of things, along with the deeds of great men' would be preserved for posterity in alphabetical order. ¹⁰⁶ From this we learn that his view of history had been shaped not only by the devout Amelander, but also by Diderot and D'Alembert's secular *Encyclopédie*, most of which had been completed by that time. This easy access to the international literary scene distinguishes early modern Portuguese Jewish authors from their Ashkenazi colleagues. Yet there was one thing on which they would always agree: Amsterdam, 'nesta famosa cidade', was more, much more, than mere accidental decor. In this respect it is interesting to remember the first Yiddish *Kurantn*, which in 1686–7 had championed world news, not local information, in their twice-weekly updates. ¹⁰⁷

In the 1780s, the sense of living through fascinating times became more acute than ever. Against the backdrop of the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War (1780–4), political tensions in the Republic were running high. Patriots with Enlightenment ideals were pitted against conservative Orangists, and the Jews too took sides: against revolution, democratization, and new opportunities, and for the status quo and the autocratic House of Orange, with which they had been affiliated ever since the Golden Age through the intermediacy of court Jews such as Baron Lopes Suasso and Tobias Boas in The Hague. The Orange dynasty gladly welcomed Jewish support, on this occasion as on numerous others, especially in 1785, when matters came to a head and William V and his wife, the doughty Wilhelmina of Prussia, were forced to flee The Hague under Patriot pressure. For a short period, the Amersfoort residence of the tobacco planter, merchant, and banker Benjamin Jonas Cohen (1726–1800; PLATE 43) became the

¹⁰³ Ibid. 223–5. 104 Published by L. Fuks and R. G. Fuks-Mansfeld in *StR* 9/2 (1975).

 $^{^{105}}$ Sound of Prayer and Song, 1782, MS EH 47 E 05; in 1974, this manuscript was a major source for Adler, Musical Life.

¹⁰⁶ Quoted in J. Melkman (Michman), David Franco Mendes: A Hebrew Poet (Jerusalem, 1951), 112.

See Kaplan, in response to H. Pach, 'Arranging Reality: The Editing Mechanisms of the World's First Yiddish Newspaper, the *Kurant* (Amsterdam, 1686–1687)' (doctoral thesis, University of Amsterdam, 2014).

¹⁰⁸ N. C. F. van Sas, *De metamorfose van Nederland: Van oude orde naar moderniteit 1750–1900* (Amsterdam, 2004), 69–96, 175–221.

stadholder's base of operations. 110 Cohen himself was then living in Amsterdam, which was firmly controlled by armed Patriot militias.

The bravado with which Dutch Jews had thrown themselves into this civil conflict is apparent not only from a pamphlet threatening to burn down their houses the moment they turned against the Patriots, 111 but also from the emotional release that followed Amsterdam's recapture by Orangist troops in the autumn of 1787. To add to the glamour of this victory, the city's Jewish district was decorated all in orange, including a light show involving the foremost symbol of Jewish loyalty to the Dutch people: Benjamin Cohen's villa on the stately Amersfoortse Zuidsingel. 112 The events and their happy ending led David Franco Mendes to write a supplement to his Memorias, 113 and Zalman Prinz to expand his Kronik (both works mentioned above). 114 The inevitable had happened: the Jews had entered the political debate. And in doing so, even before 1796, they became part of a new political alliance, which brought together Jews and non-Jews—ironically enough, for a strictly conservative cause.

Needless to say, while the Jews had been free to take political sides in 1787, they had not been eligible for political office. In many respects, their role in society remained marginal. Or as the Patriots put it in the above-mentioned pamphlet (which, tellingly, was addressed to 'their Jewish *Fellow Citizens*'), '[as] unfortunate victims of the religion that you profess . . . your political status will always be a sorrowful sight for sensitive hearts'. ¹¹⁵ In 1796 that heart-rending status was to change in one fell swoop, thanks to those same Patriots. A year later, Bromet and De Lémon joined the Batavian parliament. ¹¹⁶ A giant leap for mankind, one might think, but a small step for Bromet and De Lémon, who had become part of *unzere medines* long before then. Indeed, every *événement* has its prehistory.

¹¹⁰ J. Zwarts, Het verblijf van Prins Willem V in Amersfoort ten huize van den joodschen tabaksplanter Benjamin Cohen (Amsterdam, 1921); J. Meijer, Zij lieten hun sporen achter: Joodse bijdragen tot de Nederlandse beschaving (Utrecht, 1964), 99–103; and M. Gans, Memorboek: Platenatlas van het leven der joden van de middeleeuwen tot 1940 (Baarn, 1971), 254–8.

¹¹¹ De Nederlandsche Patriotten aan hunne Joodsche Mede-burgers (Amsterdam, c.1789).

¹¹² The Amersfoort Jewish community was rewarded for services rendered with an item from the wardrobe of Wilhelmina of Prussia, which was subsequently turned into a *parochet* (Ark curtain); E. Hartkamp-Jonxis, 'De voorhang van de synagoge in Amersfoort, of een japon van Wilhelmina van Pruisen', *Leids Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* (1985), 401–14.

¹¹³ Memorias succintas de Nosso KK de Amsterd[a]m. Nas Turbulações desta Cidade e Provincias unidas no Anno Prodigioza de 1787 & a Impengada a Felice Tranquilidade que a Divina Magestade fez de Succeder a Ellas, MS EH 49 B 19. Published by L. Fuks and R. G. Fuks-Mansfeld, 'Een Portugese kroniek over het einde van de Patriottentijd door David Franco Mendes', StR 7/1 (1973), 8–39.

¹¹⁴ See n. 79 above; Wallet, 'Links in a Chain', 225–31, 233–45.

^{115 &}lt;a href="https://data.jck.nl/page/aggregation/jhm-documenten/Doo9259">https://data.jck.nl/page/aggregation/jhm-documenten/Doo9259 (accessed 1 Nov. 2019).

¹¹⁶ See above, p. 181.

Conclusion: In the Shadow of the Enlightenment

Was the Republic the only place in Europe where Jewish life could make itself at home in early modern society? The question is easier asked than answered. Research has shown that Jews also developed close ties to their host societies in other parts of Europe, but the exact similarities and differences remain elusive. 117 What is significant here is that, in the course of their research, historians have examined the role of other processes besides the Enlightenment as the key to emancipation and modernity. The Israeli historian Azriel Shochat dealt the old paradigm its first serious blow, by linking Jewish modernism in Germany not to intellectual revolution, but to everyday manifestations of innovation and acculturation. A similar scenario may well hold true for the Republic, and yet . . . Evolution or revolution, the truth usually lies somewhere in between. Therefore, having arrived at the conclusion of this chapter, it is opportune briefly to retrace the outlines of the Dutch Enlightenment and weigh its role in the changes in Jewish life against the innate Jewish aptitude for modernity.

Fortunately, we have a text that can help us do just that. In 1770, well before Abbé Grégoire committed his plans for Jewish *régénération* to paper, the Orangist periodical *De Koopman* published an essay on Jewish emancipation through regeneration, written by one 'Mordechai van Aron de...'.¹¹⁸ In fluent Dutch, Mordechai offered his diagnosis: the majority of the Jews in the Republic were destitute, and it was the Sephardim who had borne the brunt of the recent stagnation in international trade. 'They died rich, and their Progeny grew poor', was his summary of their economic decline. ¹¹⁹ Like Grégoire twenty years later, he not only advocated government measures that would make the Jews 'more useful to the State, to the General Public, and to 'Trade' but also made an appeal for large-scale cultural adaptation by the Jewish community itself.

There were eighteen practical recommendations in his *Plan tot redress* ('Plan of Redress'), addressed as much to the state as to its Jewish subjects. Jewish professionals, Mordechai wrote, should be admitted to professions from which they had hitherto been barred. He also called for facilities where Jews and Christians would work together in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance. He argued that Jewish children should

117 A. Shochat, The Beginnings of the Haskalah in Germany [Im hilufei tekufot] (Jerusalem, 1960); T. M. Endelman, The Jews of Georgian England, 1714–1830: Tradition and Change in a Liberal Society (Philadelphia, 1979); D. Ruderman, Jewish Enlightenment in an English Key: Anglo-Jewry's Construction of Modern Jewish Thought (Princeton, 2000); G. Hundert, Jews in Poland-Lithuania in the Eighteenth Century: A Genealogy of Modernity (Berkeley, 2004); L. Hecht (ed.), Jewish Enlightenment in the Czech Lands (= Jewish Culture and History, 13/2–3) (2012); F. Bregoli, Mediterranean Enlightenment: Livornese Jews, Tuscan Culture, and Eighteenth-Century Reform (Stanford, 2014).

118 'Provisioneel plan, tot redres in de Polityke Huishouding, Negotie, en Middelen van bestaan der Hollandse Jooden, Ten einde hen nuttiger voor den Staat, voor het Algemeen, en voor den Koophandel te maaken', in *De Koopman of Weekelijksche bijdragen ten Opbouw van Neerlands Koophandel en Zeevaard*, vol. ii (Amsterdam, 1770), 425–52; R. G. Fuks-Mansfeld, 'Introduction to the Article on Jewish Emancipation by Mordechai van Aaron de... in the Dutch weekly *De Koopman'*, *StR* 30/I (1996), 190–4.

learn French and Dutch, and that they deserved a better education than the traditional *heder* could offer. And why not join the Sephardi and Ashkenazi nations into one united Jewish community? Likewise, the Christian day of the Lord could be merged with 'the Sabbath, [which] could easily be moved to Sunday'. In support of all this, Mordechai invoked the Enlightenment concept of natural law, which 'teaches [us to] treat all people as equals', and referred to 'the principle of Universal Tolerance which Europe now embraces'. ¹²⁰ The Jews had become, to reinstate an old term, *connaturals*, deserving of 'equal Privileges and Liberties', depending on their good conduct. All this, of course, was for the public good, for in the words of Mordechai, 'are not well-behaved Jews much better Citizens and Patriots, in hundreds of situations, than ill-behaved Christians?' ¹²¹

In modern research, the hunt was on for Mordechai's true identity. Jozeph Michman speculated that, given his letters to Voltaire, the philosopher Isaac de Pinto (1717–87) might be the brain behind the *Plan*, ¹²² but it seems more likely that it was the publisher of *De Koopman* himself, the prolific but forgotten Willem Ockers (1741–82), who had donned the disguise of Mordechai ben Aron de [Jood, i.e. 'the Jew'?]. ¹²³ In spectatorial literature, we encounter various other examples of authors creating a fictitious character as a mouthpiece for their unorthodox ideas. Furthermore, in his capacity as editor Ockers could simultaneously comment on Mordechai's suggestions and, where appropriate, add sceptical remarks or express unconditional support in the margins. The result was a political dialogue initiated in the pages of *De Koopman*, which in 1770 was still too far removed from Jewish discourse to have any clear resonance there.

In the years 1750–1814, signs of an enlightened Jewish revolution were scarce, to put it mildly. After 1796, the Dutch Jews were quick to subscribe to the traditional, universal, none too radical episteme of the late French–Dutch Enlightenment. ¹²⁴ In the years leading up to emancipation, Jewish intellectual life had been no less tame. ¹²⁵

¹²⁰ 'Provisioneel plan, . . .', in De Koopman of Weekelijksche bijdragen ten Opbouw van Neerlands Koophandel en Zeevaard, ii 435–6.

¹²² Melkman (Michman), David Franco Mendes, 134. For De Pinto, see I. J. A. Nijenhuis, Een joodse philosophe: Isaac de Pinto (1717–1787) en de ontwikkeling van de politieke economie in de Europese Verlichting (Amsterdam, 1992); A. Sutcliffe, 'Can a Jew Be a Philosophe? Isaac de Pinto, Voltaire, and Jewish Participation in the European Enlightenment', Jewish Social Studies, 6/3 (2000), 31–51, and id., Judaism and Enlightenment, Ideas in Context, 66 (Cambridge, 2003).

¹²³ T. Jongenelen, 'Mordechai: Illusie en werkelijkheid in het spectatoriale blad *De Koopman*', *Mededelingen van de Stichting Jacob Campo Weyerman*, 26 (2003), 94–105.

¹²⁴ I. E. Zwiep, 'Knowledge and Inclusivity in Dutch Jewish Scholarship after 1796', in M. Thulin and C. Wiese (eds.), Wissenschaft des Judentums in Europe: Comparative and Transnational Perspectives, Studia Judaica 76 (Berlin, forthcoming).

¹²⁵ For a reconstruction, see I. E. Zwiep, 'Jewish Enlightenment Reconsidered: The Dutch Eighteenth Century', in R. Fontaine et al. (eds.), Sepharad in Ashkenaz: Medieval Jewish Knowledge and Eighteenth-Century Enlightened Jewish Discourse (Amsterdam, 2007), 281–311.

The Amsterdam Sephardim indulged in writing dilettantish Hebrew belles-lettres, which were innovative in their unapologetic dependence on European models, but never crossed the boundaries of tradition and community. ¹²⁶ By then, the local Yiddish press had reached the end of a period of impressive international productivity, mostly in the religious domain. ¹²⁷ And every now and then an author would visit the liberal Republic to have a potentially explosive manuscript printed on its presses.

For this latter purpose, the person to address was Loeb ben Moses Soesmans who—working first in Amsterdam, then in Leiden and The Hague—published a series of 'proto-maskilic' works. These include text-critical prayer-books by Solomon Zalman Hanau (1777), the Hebrew translation of Euclid's *Elements* by Baruch Shick of Shklov (1779), and *Ḥokhmat hashorashim* by Naphtali Herz Ullman (1781), a Jewish Deist born in Germany. The costs were covered by Benjamin Cohen, with David Franco Mendes supplying laudatory Hebrew verses for the front matter.

In short, Enlightenment thinking came from without and would never really take root in the local discourse. The rich would sponsor the endeavour and display the books on their shelves, ¹²⁹ the rabbis wrote their pious approbations, and that was it. Only Ullman's derisive discussion of divine providence and oral tradition provoked some (conservative) response, much like Spinoza's 'abominable heresies' had done a century before. ¹³⁰ Scholarly opinion at the time was perhaps best expressed by Jacob Israel Chai Vita in his *Kuzari* parody of ¹⁷⁷²/80, in which the King's excessive appetite for secular knowledge is reined in by the Rabbi—without a trace of irony, one might add. ¹³¹

Was there really no point of contact with the Haskalah in any of this? Of course there was, but we should beware of interpreting that interface in terms of influence, dependence, and Enlightenment. The fact that the famous *maskil* Naphtali Herz

 $^{^{126}}$ S. Berger and I. E. Zwiep, 'Epigones and the Formation of New Literary Canons: Sephardi Anthologies in Eighteenth-Century Amsterdam', in eid. (eds.), *Epigones and the Dynamic of Jewish Culture* (= StR 40) (Leuven, 2008), 147–58.

¹²⁷ S. Berger, *Producing Redemption in Amsterdam: Early Modern Yiddish Books in Paratextual Perspective*, Studies in Jewish History and Culture, 37 (Leiden, 2013).

¹²⁸ S. Seeligmann, 'Het geestelijk leven in de Hoogduitsche Joodsche gemeente te 's Gravenhage', in D. van Zuiden (ed.), *De Hoogduitsche Joden in 's Gravenhage* (The Hague, 1913), 58–62; Z. Malachi, 'N. H. Ulman, Maskil and Philosopher' (Heb.), in *Studies on the History of Dutch Jewry*, vol. ii (1979), 77–88; F. van Lieburg, 'On Naphtali Herz Ulman's Biography and the Reception of His Works in The Netherlands', *Zutot: Perspectives on Jewish Culture*, 3 (2003), 58–65; R. Munk, *Naftali Herz Ulman, een vroege maskil* (inaugural lecture, Universiteit Leiden, 2003).

¹²⁹ See the 'proto-maskilic' titles in the catalogue of Mozes Teixeira de Mattos (1768); MS EH 47 A 8.

¹³⁰ Simon Coppenhagen, Bechi Naharot (1784); Seeligmann, 'Geestelijk leven', 61; Munk, Naftali Herz

¹³¹ Telunot bene adam (Humankind's Complaint), MS EH 47 D 36, lines 271–4 and 337–420 respectively; edited in S. Arndt, 'Ein hebräisches Gedicht aus Amsterdam: Jacob Vita Israel, Telunot Bene Adam' (MA thesis, University of Amsterdam, 2005).

Wessely (1725–1805) spent time in Amsterdam in the 1760s led Jozeph Michman to label this period an 'initial stage in the reception of the Haskalah'. Other facts, however, point in a different direction: the Haskalah had not yet begun, and Wessely's *Divrei shalom ve'met* ('Words of Peace and Truth') was published (to a mixed reception) only years later, in 1782.

Still, if Wessely did not make any enlightened disciples during that early visit, he did make friends for life. When his 1782 publication brought him into conflict with the rabbinate (which in the heat of the argument he had called 'unkosher carrion'), David Franco Mendes expressed his solidarity. In a letter dated spring 1789, in which he accepted membership of the Berlin Lesegesellschaft Chevrat Dorshe Leshon Ever (Society of Researchers of the Hebrew Language), Franco Mendes—then 76 years old—professed his lasting admiration for his old friend Wessely, who had been 'like a brother' to him.¹³³ Franco Mendes, a man of letters, will have admired the early Wessely as a fellow Hebraist, for even in 1789 he shows no sign of engagement with the actual maskilic cause. More curiosity about the new German Jewish thinking was found among Christian readers, who learned about the latest developments via Dutch translations.¹³⁴

One such translation was on the desk of the young David Wagenaar when, around 1775, he began working on his Hebrew adaptation of Mendelssohn's *Phaedon oder über die Unsterblichkeit der Seele* (1767). ¹³⁵ In a letter to the philosopher, Wagenaar commented that there was a high demand for his translation among 'many devout and learned men' in his circles. ¹³⁶ One might wonder whether those learned men were truly interested in infinite *Bildung* as humanity's destiny. For Wagenaar, the *Phaedon* was primarily about 'the Jewish articles of faith and the heart of our holy teachings'. To prove this, he wrote, he had even drawn up a list—which regrettably has not been preserved—neatly presenting all relevant passages from the Bible, the Talmud, and the Zohar.

The ease with which Wagenaar introduced Mendelssohn into the Amsterdam canon was characteristic of the mentality of the 'devout and learned men' of the late Republic. Their 'Enlightenment' did not unleash any critique of religion, but was used

¹³² J. Michman, The History of Dutch Jewry during the Emancipation Period, 162–7.

 $^{^{133}}$ The draft letter has been preserved in Franco Mendes's literary diary *Sukkat David*, MS EH 47 A 26, fo. 15.

¹³⁴ N. H. Wessely, *Woorden der waarheid en des vredes* (The Hague, 1782); G. Brender à Brandis, *Wijsgeerige verhandelingen, brieven en gesprekken, van Moses Mendelssohn* (Leiden, 1788). There is no evidence of Jewish contributions to these publications, *pace* F. Hiegentlich, 'Reflections on the Relationship between the Dutch Haskalah and the German Haskalah', in J. Michman and T. Levie (eds.), *DJH* ii. 210–18, where '[Moses Cohen] Belinfante cum suis' are mentioned as possible initiators of the project.

¹³⁵ Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana, Amsterdam, MS Ros. 263 (autograph); Dutch translation: *Phedon, of over de Onsterflykheit der Ziele in drie 'tzamenspraaken* (The Hague, 1769). See also A. Altmann, *Moses Mendelssohn: A Biographical Study* (University, Ala., 1973), 192–3, 790, and Feiner, *The Jewish Enlightenment*, 26.

¹³⁶ The letter is included in Moses Mendelssohn, *Gesammelte Schriften*, 19, ed. H. Borodiansky (Stuttgart, 1974), 206–7.

to strengthen the foundations of their Jewish tradition. In short, new ideas were neither shunned nor rejected, but kindly invited in and, if necessary, tacitly domesticated.

In 1810 Tsvi Hirsch Somerhausen concluded the first part of his spelling book for children with a short Hebrew reading lesson that enumerated the blessings of emancipation. Somewhat paradoxically, he linked the topic of civic equality to the theme of Israel's divine election. The Chosen People were awfully lucky, he wrote, to have a God who had not only granted them his Torah but also 'multiplied His benevolence to us many, many times in this day and age. For with almost all nations we live together as equals in one country. They see us as their brothers. We eat the good things of the earth as one of them.' 137

Chosen to be equal, Somerhausen exulted. But not everyone was equally contented. Many Jews continued to hope for the restoration of the old, semi-autonomous order. After all, hadn't they enjoyed the good things that Holland provided even before 1796, as a self-governing nation rather than as brothers and citizens? With the Jewish elite caught in this ideological stalemate, very little changed in the lives of ordinary Jews. It was up to King William I to break the impasse in 1814: was Dutch Jewry to continue on the road of Enlightenment, or were they allowed to return to the decentralized diversity of the years before 1796?

¹³⁷ Somerhausen, Hebreeuwsch spel- en leesboekje, 20.

'RELIGIOSITY, CIVILITY, AND INDUSTRY'

The Centralization and Nationalization of the Dutch Jews, 1814–1870¹

BART T. WALLET

On the sabbath of 18 December 1813, Barend Boas decided to go to the synagogue again after a period of absence. His son had persuaded him, but he was conscious of the risk he was taking. As a *commissaire-surveillant* (administrator) of the Ashkenazi community in Amsterdam and former member of the High Consistory (Opperconsistorie), he symbolized the radical changes of the Batavian-French period. After the French troops departed on 15 November, there was continual unrest in Amsterdam's Jewish districts. On the sabbath in question, the agitation came to a head: Boas and a fellow administrator, Aron Levie de Metz, were thrown out of the synagogue after a few scuffles, and as he returned home an attempt was made to throw him into the canal. His two sons were roughed up, and when he arrived home he found that the windows had been smashed.²

The incident made it excruciatingly clear how deep the divisions ran in Dutch Jewish communities over the legacy of the Batavian-French period: emancipation, the consistory structure, and the policy of integration. Many members of the old governing elite and the rabbinate wished to return to the corporate 'Jewish Nations' of the *ancien régime*. The new Enlightenment elite advocated preserving the legacy of the period that had just ended and wanted to maintain Jewish citizenship and the hierarchical organizational structure of the consistories unchanged. Lastly, a middle group hoped to hold on to civil rights while restoring the independence of local Jewish communities.

¹ The title of this chapter refers to the Jewish ideal and programme sketched in the anniversary publication Vereeniging ter bevordering van Ambachten onder de Israëlieten te 's-Gravenhage: Herinnering aan haar vijf-entwintigjarig bestaan 6 December 1846–71 (The Hague, 1871), 3.

² J. Michman, The History of Dutch Jewry during the Emancipation Period: Gothic Turrets on a Corinthian Building, 1787–1815 (Amsterdam, 1995), 212–13.

The debate was anything but dry and theoretical; some Jewish communities took advantage of the country's administrative vacuum to chart their own course and restore the status quo prior to emancipation. In towns and cities where different groups were at odds, especially Amsterdam, they literally fought out their differences. The rapid disintegration of the organizational structures of the Jewish communities led William Frederick, Prince of Orange, to make the Jewish question a priority soon after assuming power as the country's sovereign prince.

The years 1795–1813 were, without a doubt, the most revolutionary period in Dutch Jewish history. Jews saw their legal status change from members of corporate 'Nations' to individual citizens. State authorities, ideologists, and administrators developed strategies to integrate Jews into the national community then being formed. Local Jewish communities were united into regional and national organizational structures. Yet as fundamental as these changes were, in the political turbulence of the time, with its ever-changing state structures and national governments, many plans remained mere words on paper. All in all, the Batavian-French period can best be seen as a stage of energetic experimentation with new forms and ideas, sometimes in rapid and chaotic succession, from which no new unifying identity and structure emerged.

It was only later, in the stage of the Kingdom of the Netherlands—which formed gradually in the years 1813–15—that the main lines were sketched of how the Jewish community would be organized until well into the twentieth century. The objective was to redefine Judaism within a moderate Enlightenment view of modernity, a nation-state in development, and the related ideas of citizenship. What did it mean to be Jewish after the 'Gelykstaat' (Declaration of Equal Civil Rights) of 1796? How did religious elements relate to national characteristics? How did individual Jewish identity and collective organization relate to each other? And how were they connected to Jewish communities outside the country? How was a Jewish community supposed to be organized in the enlightened absolutist state that the Netherlands was in the period 1814–48?

In the period 1814–70, the national Dutch authorities were more actively involved in the Jewish community and Jewish life than at any time before or since (apart from the occupation period, 1940–5, of course). Public authorities, in close cooperation with the Jewish administrative elite, made far-reaching interventions into community life and thus to a large degree shaped the playing field for Dutch Jews. One major turning point was the liberal revision of the constitution in 1848. While the state had until then claimed *jus in sacra*, the right to administer the various religious denominations, there was a shift in 1848 to *jus circa sacra*, the much narrower view that the state was responsible solely for making sure that churches and synagogues adhered to the laws in force. If the first stage, 1814–48, was one of extensive state involvement, in the second stage, 1848–70, public authorities took great pains to disentangle themselves. It was not until 1870 that this process was completed and the Jewish community entered a new

stage, no longer administered by the national Ministry of Reformed and Other Religious Affairs, excepting Roman Catholicism (Departement voor Hervormde en Andere Erediensten behalve de Rooms-Katholieke).

Although national policy left an ever deeper mark on the structure and identity of Jews in the Netherlands, that is not the whole story. There were also countervailing forces and connections, both conscious and unconscious, to wider Jewish life in the form of the western Sephardi diaspora and the world of the Ashkenazi Jews. This connectedness found expression through long-familiar channels, but also took new forms. One integral part of this chapter is therefore the question of how old transnational loyalties and modern international Jewish solidarity were or remained influential, especially in a time of unprecedented 'nationalization'. First we will look at the figures, territory, and structures: the parameters within which Jewish life unfolded. Then we will turn to the interaction between society and the Jewish community as it manifested in integration processes and national debates on the role of the Jews. Then the focus will shift to life within the Jewish community: the struggle to keep that community intact, religious life, and cultural diversity. An inside perspective on the Dutch Jewish community will also reveal its tight interconnectedness with the wider Jewish world—the theme of the final section.

Demographics and Geography

While the eighteenth century was characterized by constant immigration and therefore by the growth of the Jewish communities in the Republic, that situation changed in the first half of the nineteenth century. The economic decline of the late eighteenth century and the Batavian-French period made the Netherlands less attractive to newcomers, and many Dutch Jews went in search of a new life elsewhere.

Demographic information from the period 1814–70 is very uneven in quality. The information about the first part of this period is based on a variety of records, which were not always kept carefully, and parts of which have not survived the ravages of time and, in particular, the Second World War. From 1830 onwards, the national authorities held a census every ten years, gathering the first reliable information about how Dutch citizens defined themselves in religious terms. Throughout this period, these self-definitions correspond almost exactly to internal records of local Jewish congregations: those who were registered as members of a Jewish congregation generally described themselves to the public authorities as Jews. After 1870, these two categories gradually drifted apart. While the censuses of 1830 and 1840 included only the general category of 'Israelites' (Israeliteen), from 1849 onwards a distinction was drawn between 'Dutch Israelites' (Nederlands Israeliteen), meaning Ashkenazi Jews, and 'Portuguese Israelites' (Portugees Israeliteen), meaning Sephardi Jews. (For more

Table 6.1 The number of Jews in the Netherlands, 1809–1869						
	Year	Number	Percentage of the Dutch population			
	1809	39,596	1.80			
	1830	46,397	1.78			
	1840	52,245	1.83			
	1849	58,626	1.92			
	1859	63,790	1.93			
	1869	68,003	1.90			
Source: H. Knippenberg, 'Assimilating Jews in Dutch Nation-Building: The Missing "Pillar"', Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie, 93/2 (2002), 191–207.						

information about the use of the term 'Israelites', see the section headed 'Religion and Culture' below.) The number of Portuguese Jews fluctuated around 5 per cent of the total number of Jews in the Netherlands, or around 3,000 in absolute terms (see Table 6.1).

The Dutch cities, especially Amsterdam, were relatively hard hit by the economic crises and Napoleon's Continental System, the large-scale embargo against trading with Britain. The number of Jews in the capital therefore stagnated in the early years and did not rise again until mid-century. In 1795, when a census was held in preparation for the election to the National Assembly, 20,335 Jews were counted in Amsterdam. In 1809 that figure was only slightly higher—21,444—and by 1849 it had slowly increased to 25,156. From that time onwards, growth accelerated somewhat, and there were 29,952 Jews in Amsterdam in 1869. Throughout this period, Jews constituted more than 10 per cent of the total Amsterdam population.

The emancipation decree of 1796 had removed the last obstacles to Jews settling throughout the country. That made it possible for more of them to migrate to rural areas and medium-sized provincial towns. This led to a substantial shift in the distribution of Jews over the country. While more than half of them—54 per cent—lived in Amsterdam at the start of the century, that figure had dropped to a historic low of 42 per cent by 1859. Although the capital still undeniably hosted the country's main Jewish community, the importance and influence of other parts of the country increased. The number of Jewish communities, whether in the form of official Jewish congregations (Nederlands-Israëlietische Gemeenten) or smaller, informal communities, increased rapidly. In 1821 there were 122 congregations in the 'Israelite denomination', excluding the Southern Netherlands and Luxembourg. This included both Portuguese and Ashkenazi congregations. By 1877 the number of Ashkenazi congregations alone had risen to 176.

Table 6.2 Regional distribution of the Jewish population, 1809–1879 (%)							
	1809	1849	1879				
Amsterda	am 54.2	43.0	49.5				
Rotterdar	m 5.4	5.9	8.1				
The Hagu	ue 4.7	6.0	5.0				
Rest of Ho	olland/Utrecht 11.9	12.7	9.3				
North	8.8	13.2	12.2				
East	10.1	12.7	10.8				
South	4.9	6.5	4.9				
South	4.9	6.5	4.9				

Source: H. van Solinge and M. de Vries (eds.), De joden in Nederland anno 2000: Demografisch profiel en binding aan het jodendom (Amsterdam, 2001), 34.

The period 1814–70 saw the greatest expansion of all time in Dutch rural Jewry. It was characterized by small, tight-knit communities dominated by a few, often interrelated, families, who tended to look to a larger community in a provincial town for religious leadership. The term 'medina' (*mediene*) was used in this context to refer to a region—'Zwolle and its medina' or 'Leeuwarden and its medina'—rather than as a general term for rural areas in general or for the entire country outside Amsterdam. (See Table 6.2.)

Because the Southern Netherlands were part of the Kingdom from 1815 onwards, large numbers of Jews went from the north, mainly Amsterdam, to the cities of Brussels, Antwerp, Ghent, and Liège. The Southern Netherlands had forbidden Jewish settlement for many years under Spanish and Habsburg rule, and it was not until the late eighteenth century that small Jewish communities formed. In the years when the Netherlands was part of France, there was an organized Jewish congregation in the south, mainly in Brussels. But the integration of the south into the United Kingdom of the Netherlands led to unprecedented growth of the Jewish population there; the new arrivals came mainly from Amsterdam and Germany.³

Eighteenth-century patterns of migration also continued. The Netherlands continued to attract migrants from Germany and eastern Europe, although their numbers sharply decreased because of a combination of gradually improved conditions in their own territories and relative poverty in the Netherlands. From 1817 onwards, there was another complicating factor: the Netherlands and Prussia had entered into a mutual extradition treaty for tramps and vagabonds. This treaty was designed to staunch the flow across the border, until then unhindered, of all sorts of small-time vendors and

³ C. Kasper-Holtkotte, Im Westen neues: Migration und ihre Folgen. Deutschen Juden als Pioniere jüdischen Lebens in Belgien, 18./19. Jahrhundert (Leiden, 2003).

pedlars, and of beggars, professional or occasional. In 1821 Prussia took the additional step of prohibiting peddling, which led some German Jewish pedlars to decide to settle permanently in the Netherlands soon afterwards. Family networks persisted within the wider European Ashkenazi community, but there was a growing tendency to seek potential spouses within the borders of the Kingdom. In many cases, this created family networks with a strong regional orientation, spread over a few neighbouring communities.

Besides immigration, there was also constant emigration from the Republic, mainly to Great Britain and the Dutch colonies. There were close ties between London and Amsterdam in the eighteenth century, created by family relationships, migration, remigration, and Amsterdam's role as a provider of religious officials to the Sephardi and Ashkenazi communities. In the nineteenth century, these processes continued unabated; migration to London increased as a result of grinding poverty among Jews in Amsterdam. As late as 1861, the London Board of Guardians commented: 'Holland continues to supply most of the foreign poor.'⁴

Dutch Jews were also drawn to the Americas. The Dutch colonies of Surinam and Curaçao were especially popular destinations, sometimes used as the basis for onward migration in the Caribbean region or to the United States. The traditional network of the western Sephardi diaspora was still in full operation, and it took in both Portuguese and Ashkenazi Jews who sought to build a new life in the 'New World'. Until 1830, most Jewish immigrants to the United States came from Great Britain or the Netherlands, giving Jewish communities there a distinctly Anglo-Dutch character. Even after that, when growing numbers of German Jewish migrants chose the United States rather than western Europe as their final destination, the role and visibility of Dutch Jews remained substantial for some time. In the period 1800–80, an estimated 6,500 Dutch Jews emigrated to the United States, most of them to New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, New Orleans, and Boston.

Dutch Jewish migrants played a significant role in established Jewish communities both in London and in the United States, but when circumstances allowed, they seized the opportunity to build their own Dutch Jewish infrastructure. Tenter Ground, a deeply impoverished area of the Spitalfields district in the East End of London, had such a high concentration of Dutch Jews (known colloquially as 'chuts') from the 1840s onwards that they gave the area a unique character. They had a synagogue of their own where the *minhag amsterdam* was observed—Sandys Row Synagogue—as well as their own *hevrot* (associations) for support and study and a Dutch choir. There were similar Dutch Jewish synagogues, burial associations, and support organizations in New York

⁴ Quoted in R. P. Swierenga, The Forerunners: Dutch Jewry in the North American Diaspora (Detroit, 1994). 57.

⁵ B. Wallet, 'Transformation of a Diaspora: The Western Sephardi Diaspora in the Nineteenth Century' (unpublished lecture, European Assocation for Jewish Studies, Ravenna, 2010).

⁶ Swierenga, The Forerunners, passim.

(Bnai Israel, 1847–after 1880), Boston (Beth El, 1859–75), and Philadelphia (Bnai Israel, 1852–79).⁷

The State and the Jewish Community, 1814–1848

The chaotic situation in late 1813 and early 1814 made the status of Jews a top priority for the country's new sovereign prince, William Frederick, Prince of Orange. Although his ministers showed the same wide range of opinions as existed within the Jewish community—with preferences ranging from a return to the 'Jewish Nation' to full continuation of the French situation—Prince William's aim was a high level of continuity with the preceding period. He himself had absorbed many Enlightenment ideas and ideals well before then and put them into practice in Fulda during the Napoleonic period. His experience governing that principality proved useful to him in the Netherlands, in general and in 'religious affairs'.

He decided that Jews would continue to have all the same civil rights as other citizens, thus ruling out any return to the 'Jewish Nation'. Even in the United Kingdom of the Netherlands, the Jewish community could not be anything more than a religious community, stripped of its unique, distinguishing national characteristics. Its members had become Dutch nationals—with all the responsibilities that entailed to their state and society. Jewish identity could only be interpreted as the religious affiliation of the citizen in question. The next question was then how Jewish religious communities should be organized. The experiments of the preceding period—the High Consistory and the regional consistories falling under Paris—had both involved a strictly enforced hierarchy. This approach had met with fierce opposition from local administrators and rabbis who were attached to their autonomy, an opposition also fuelled by the gap between the progressive agenda of the consistories and the largely conservative local elites. The continuation of the entire consistorial system would have met with great resistance from Jews throughout the country.

The solution came from two men who, from that time on, worked in close partnership to shape the future of Dutch Jewry. The Jewish physician Samuël Elias Stein in The Hague, a progressive from an Orangist family and the secretary of the conservative board of the Ashkenazi congregation in The Hague, devised a plan that was adopted by the Secretary of Religious Affairs, Jacobus Didericus Janssen, a member of the Dutch Reformed Church. Their proposal was two-pronged: the local Jewish communities would have their coveted autonomy restored to them, so that they could each

⁷ Swierenga, The Forerunners, passim.

⁸ The information presented in this and the following sections without further notes is based on B. Wallet, *Nieuwe Nederlanders: De integratie van de joden in Nederland 1814–1851* (Amsterdam, 2007).

⁹ J. van Eijnatten, 'Religie en het koninkrijk: Een dwars verband', in I. de Haan, P. den Hoed, and H. te Velde (eds.), Een nieuwe staat: Het begin van het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden (Amsterdam, 2013), 285–307.

make their own local policies on many issues, but a structure would have to be put in place for communication with the national authorities. This structure would enable the state to inform all the local congregations about national policy decisions. It was a solution that satisfied the wishes of local, conservative groups while benefiting the state by giving it a straightforward way of reaching all Dutch Jews. It was progressive Jews who were most disappointed with the result; for instance, the lawyer Jonas Daniël Meijer (PLATE 39) no longer wished to play a prominent role.

Yet it was ultimately the conservative faction that drew the short straw. The new correspondence system would grow, in just a few years, into a comprehensive organization that imposed binding obligations, openly referred to from 1821 onwards as the 'Israelite hierarchy'. The king initially set up a temporary Commission for Israelite Affairs (Commissie tot de Zaken der Israëliten), appointing its members himself. A pivotal role was played by the secretary (and member), Samuël Elias Stein, who was allowed to implement his own plan. In 1817 this temporary commission was converted into a permanent Chief Commission for Israelite Affairs (Hoofdcommissie tot de Zaken der Israëliten), which acted as an intermediary between the national authorities and local Jewish communities. One task of the Chief Commission was to represent the Jewish community and its interest to the state, but at the same time it ensured the promulgation of state policies, and it enforced compliance with them.

The model that had been found for this Israelite denomination showed a great similarity to the structures imposed on other religious denominations around that time—the Dutch Reformed Church (Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk), the Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Remonstrant Brotherhood, and the General Mennonite Society. The national authorities subscribed to the separation of Church and State, but all this meant to them was that they would not become involved with the substance of religion. The administrative and social sides of religion, in contrast, were seen as entirely the responsibility of the state. Religion was regarded as a vital factor in social peace and in nurturing good citizenship. All governing boards of houses of worship were therefore appointed by the king and, in formal terms, fell under the abovementioned Ministry of Reformed Religious Affairs. That ministry was headed by the Secretary of Religious Affairs, who did the preparatory policy work for the minister responsible. Important decisions were ultimately presented to the king, who had the final say. In this system, the Chief Commission was fully integrated into the machinery of the state (Fig. 6.1).

This commission had six to nine members, all from the major cities in Holland: Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and The Hague. To the chagrin of the Amsterdam congregations, the members in The Hague, who were closest to the ministry, formed the executive committee (the *gecommitteerden*) and dealt with all everyday business. More consequential matters were discussed at the plenary meetings. The relatively small Portuguese Jewish communities were consistently over-represented on the Chief

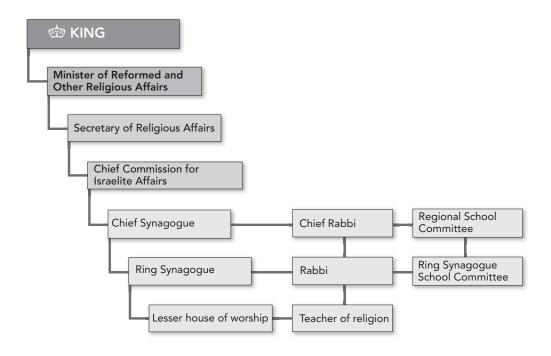


Figure 6.1 The organizational structure of Dutch Jewry, 1814-1870

Commission. Under pressure from William I, they had had to accept inclusion in a single 'denomination' with the Ashkenazi communities, but in return they were granted an influential voice in Jewish affairs. Both the state and the Ashkenazi elite saw the Portuguese Jews as a model to be emulated in their combination of integration into society with respect for Jewish tradition. For this reason, Portuguese members were often nominated to preside over the committee and thus become the national representative of Dutch Jewry. The physician Immanuel Capadose was the first president (1814–26), followed by *jhr.* (*jonkheer*, a minor aristocratic title) Isaac Teixeira Junior (1826–8), Jacob Mendes de Leon (interim president in 1836), *jhr.* Isaac Henriques de Castro (1836–49), Samuel van Joseph Teixeira de Mattos (1860–5), and Abraham de Pinto (interim, 1865). The Ashkenazi members who became president were progressive and socially successful, often lawyers by education, and in many instances closely related to one another: Carel Asser (1828–36), Tanchum Polak Daniels (interim, 1850–3), Michel Henri Godefroi (1854–60), and Eduard Isaac Asser (1866–70). (For the Asser family, see PLATES 41 and 42.)

Besides the permanent members of the Chief Commission, there was also a network of twelve to fourteen Corresponding Members from the largest provincial Jewish congregations in the northern and southern Netherlands and the colonies of Surinam and Curaçao. These hand-picked leaders of local Jewish communities were responsible for keeping the Chief Commission well informed about local developments and supplied with up-to-date, first-hand information. Formally, the Corresponding Members had the right to attend the plenary meetings of the Chief Commission, but when a member from Groningen actually tried to do this, he ran up against an unwelcoming wall. Direct involvement in policymaking by members from outside the major Dutch cities was regarded as undesirable.

The Chief Commission fitted perfectly into William I's general political programme of creating a unified national identity with modern, country-wide administrative structures, governed from the capital cities of The Hague and Brussels. Local and provincial autonomy made way, once and for all, for centralized government. The new structures were also intended to facilitate the dissemination of the most important social values: good citizenship, love of king and country, toleration, diligence, and industry. Religion was seen as a royal road for the promulgation of such values.

But before the Israelite denomination could carry out a programme of this nature, it would have to be thoroughly reorganized. The centralization of all Jewish life in the kingdom was an important aspect of government policy regarding the Jewish community, especially in the early decades. The structures created were initially designed to streamline 'correspondence', but it became clear after just a few years that local Jewish autonomy would have to give way to the national programme of centralization.

At the summit of the organizational pyramid that was erected stood the king, with the minister and Chief Commission not far below. The largest Jewish congregations were designated as Chief Synagogues and tended to supply the Corresponding Members—each of whom was responsible for a particular region. In most cases, these regions followed the provincial borders, and the Chief Synagogues were in the provincial capitals. But exceptions were made for places with relatively large and wellestablished Jewish communities. In Amsterdam and The Hague, the Portuguese and Ashkenazi congregations were each designated as a Chief Synagogue, and there were also Chief Synagogues in Rotterdam, Middelburg, Amersfoort, 's-Hertogenbosch, Nijmegen, Zwolle, Groningen, and Leeuwarden. The provincial capitals of Utrecht and Arnhem were passed over in favour of Amersfoort and Nijmegen but kept trying, in the decades that followed, to seize the leading position. They eventually succeeded, although not until 1917 and 1881 respectively. In 1815, when the Southern Netherlands were incorporated into the Kingdom of the Netherlands, two additional Chief Synagogues were recognized: Maastricht, for a region that took in the provinces of Limburg, Liège, and Luxembourg, and Brussels, for South Brabant, Eastern and Western Flanders, Hainaut, Namur, and Antwerp. From 1824, finally, there were three Chief Synagogues in the colonies: the Portuguese congregations in Curação and Surinam and the Ashkenazi one in Surinam.

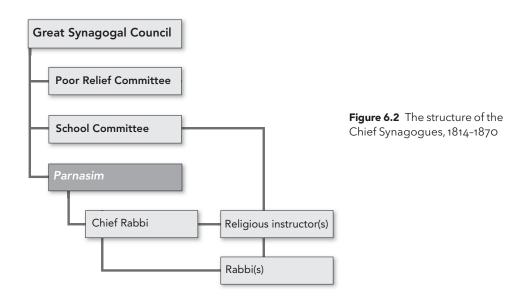
Each of the Chief Synagogues had one or more 'rings' falling under it, each with its

own Ring Synagogue, a Jewish congregation with at least one hundred members. The Ring Synagogues, in turn, supervised the smallest Jewish congregations, the *bijkerken* (lesser houses of worship) with around fifty members. All the Jewish congregations gathered annually at the regional meetings held just before Sukkot (the Feast of Tabernacles), where they discussed their collective interests, particularly the appointment, funding, and activities of the chief rabbi. In theory, each region had its own chief rabbi in the capital. A few regions were too small, however, and had to share a chief rabbi. For example, the chief rabbi in Amsterdam was responsible for two provinces: not only North Holland but also, until 1848, Utrecht. North Brabant and Zeeland likewise shared a chief rabbi, and until 1821 so did Groningen and Friesland. The chief rabbi in Zwolle was initially responsible not only for Overijssel but also for Drenthe, which did not become independent until 1852.

Centralization did not affect solely the Jewish congregational infrastructure but was also carried out in other domains. For instance, the chief rabbis had to supervise the other rabbis, who assisted them in the Chief Synagogues and could be appointed to the Ring Synagogues. They also managed and oversaw the non-secular aspects of the work of teachers of religion. There was no chief rabbi for the entire nation; that would have given the Jewish clergy too much influence. Each of the chief rabbis was responsible solely for his own region and had to submit to the administrative authority of the *parnasim* of the Chief Synagogue. The Chief Commission was allowed to convene a temporary rabbinical board to which problems of a halakhic nature could be submitted. But the general intention was strictly to limit the influence of the rabbinate to the religious sphere. For that reason, there was a deliberate break with the French policy followed from 1810 to 1813 and maintained even after that in most western European countries, according to which rabbis were part of the administrative structure. Not only would that have been in conflict with Dutch traditions, but it was also seen as an obstacle to the pursuit of the Chief Commission's moderate progressive agenda.

The reorganization that took place nationally was also carried out at the local level. The concentration of power among the *parnasim*, the board members of the Chief Synagogues, was too reminiscent of the high-handed way they had led the 'Jewish Nation'. In order to distribute power more widely, the two important domains of education and poor relief were removed from the portfolio of the *parnasim* and assigned to two independent committees. The Great Synagogal Council (Grote Kerkenraad) was the only place where the *parnasim*, the members of the education and poor relief committees, and other worthies (former *parnasim*) all met (Fig. 6.2). Although this system distributed the responsibilities over more people, almost all the board and committee members came from the same social class, and they were often directly connected to each other.

One major difference from the *ancien régime* was that local government authorities now shared in the responsibility for education and poverty relief. Specifically, local



authorities either contributed financially to Jewish systems for welfare and education or else opened up their own systems to Jews. There was a strong preference for the former option: not only was the Jewish community still responsible for part of the budget, but the public institutions could remain to some degree Christian in identity. Although the public authorities had taken over aspects of poor relief and education from the Dutch Reformed (Hervormde) Church, the successor to the old public church in the days of the Republic, this did not imply that these activities had been secularized. The state attached importance to religion and believed it was necessary to be rooted in a religious tradition to develop into a good, hard-working citizen. By allowing and funding autonomous Jewish administrative structures, they were able to preserve the Christian (in fact, generally Protestant) character of the 'general' institutions.

This policy of centralizing the Jewish community was not unique to the Netherlands among western European countries. France, Baden, and Württemberg also had centralized Jewish communities with direct ties to the state. Accordingly, the Dutch Jewish community showed fairly strong similarities to its counterparts in those countries. Great Britain and, after 1830, Belgium each had a central Jewish consultative body, but the direct connection to the state was lacking. That left those communities at greater liberty to choose their own path, but in practice they tended to hew fairly closely to the policies of the surrounding countries. A freer approach was taken, however, in the German and central European countries with no national structure for Jewish life; there, Jewish communities often retained features of the old 'Jewish Nations', and decision-making often took place at the local level. These countries lacked the emphasis on unity and moderate approach that was so characteristic of western Europe, which

created the greatest possible unity in the Jewish community. Heated debate and great diversity within these Jewish German and central European communities were the result.¹⁰

The State and the Jewish Community, 1848–1870

Over the decades, the state and the Chief Commission forged an increasingly productive working relationship. Yet there was also growing criticism, which paralleled a more general social trend of liberal opposition to the Enlightened-absolutist governing style of King William I. The direct influence of the state on houses of worship and the Jewish community was seen as contrary to the principle of separation of Church and State. The oligarchic approach to appointments—including the appointment of members of the Chief Commission—also provoked considerable criticism. The critical liberal press published articles that shone an unsparing light on state policy regarding the Jewish community. Jewish liberals, such as the secretary of Rotterdam's Chief Synagogue, Jeremias L. Heijermans, and the Amsterdam lawyer Ahasueros Salomon van Nierop adapted the broader liberal critique of William I's policy into a decisive rejection of the way Jewish life was organized at the time and the conventional views in Jewish circles.¹¹

The ultimate cause of change was the revision of the constitution in the year of revolution, 1848. The amendment of the constitution, orchestrated by Johan Rudolph Thorbecke, addressed many of the problems raised by liberal critics. One of the leading principles was a stricter interpretation of the separation of Church and State, which had numerous consequences. Not only was the government obliged to give up its role in organizing the administration of religious denominations, but the 'general organizations' also had to make their services available to the entire population, including the Jews. Both changes were easier to mandate on paper than to bring about in practice. This was especially true in the case of the Jewish community, where the process was not completed until 1870.

The disentanglement of the national authorities from the Jewish community breathed new life into old frictions and created new ones. State involvement had made it possible for all Dutch Jews to work together in a unified system; once the state showed signs of giving up that role, suppressed conflicts soon came to light. The state gave the Jewish community primary authority over its new administrative structure—the same approach that it took to other religious denominations. The king and the minister could no longer dictate how the denomination was organized. For that purpose, the Chief Commission convened a Constituante (Constituting Convention) of twenty-five members, chosen to be representative of the full geographical and ideological breadth of Dutch Jewry. The first problem arose immediately: the country's oldest

¹⁰ B. Wallet, 'Napoleon's Legacy—National Government and Jewish Community in Western Europe', in *Jahrbuch des Simon-Dubnow-Instituts/Simon Dubnow Institute Yearbook*, 6 (Göttingen, 2007), 291–309.

¹¹ Wallet, Nieuwe Nederlanders, 192-204.

congregation, the Sephardi congregation in Amsterdam (Portugees-Israëlietische Gemeente), refused to attend the meeting. It was determined to withdraw from the unified Israelite community with its Ashkenazi majority and therefore declined to take part in the deliberations on a new overarching structure for the community as a whole. But the Portuguese Jewish community in The Hague, which was much smaller in number and compelled for practical reasons to cooperate with the local Ashkenazi Jews, did wish to participate. Despite the tensions in the Portuguese community, the Constituante decided to appoint a committee of five to develop draft regulations. This committee had an impressive list of members: the politician Michel Henri Godefroi, the lawyers S. L. Nijkerk and H. H. van Gigch, the Orthodox trader Tanchum Polak Daniels, and the prominent intellectual Samuël Israël Mulder (PLATE 44). In 1851 they presented a set of regulations designed to maintain the type of system established in the first half of the nineteenth century: centralized, without any autonomy for local congregations. After considerable debate, a new version, revised in some respects, was presented to the king in 1853.

But the matter was still far from closed. A storm of criticism, from many different parties with very diverse motives, reached the ears of the public authorities and stood in the way of rapid decision-making. Meanwhile, the minister and the Chief Commission continued their work as they had in earlier years, despite the lack of a legal basis for it. In 1860 the public authorities rejected the proposed regulations on procedural grounds: the Constituante had been formed in an oligarchic manner. For new regulations to be acknowledged as valid, they would have to come from the regional level. This opened a new round of discussions, which dragged on for so long that in 1862 the minister decided he would no longer supervise the majority of the Chief Commission's activities. The source of the delay was a new problem. This time, it was Amsterdam's Orthodox Ashkenazi congregation (the Nederlands-Israëlietische Hoofdsynagoge Amsterdam) that was making trouble. As the country's largest Jewish congregation, it had for many years resented the administrative dominance of the Jews in The Hague. It therefore demanded that the new regulations either assign a dominant, leading position to Amsterdam or make a radical shift towards much greater autonomy for local congregations. In the latter case, the national body would deal only with central interests and have no say whatsoever in the internal policies of Jewish congregations. Once it looked as though Amsterdam's demands would not be met, a schism seemed inevitable. Amsterdam decided to become an independent congregation alongside the reorganized Israelite denomination. With this disastrous outcome looking increasingly likely, and the minister running out of patience, the impasse was finally resolved in 1869.¹²

¹² This reconstruction is based on the detailed reports of the synagogue council (*kerkenraad*) meetings of the Amsterdam Orthodox Ashkenazi congregation (NIHS), published from the 27 Nov. 1865 session onwards in the *Nieuw Israëlietisch Weekblad*, as well as in the reports (published in the same periodical) of the sessions of

The result was not in the least what the political liberals had been so eager to achieve in 1850. It proved impossible to maintain the unity of the denomination; the Portuguese Jews in The Hague gave in to pressure from the Portuguese congregation in Amsterdam, and from 1870 onwards the two congregations formed a separate Sephardi denomination (Portugees-Israëlitisch Kerkgenootschap; PIK). There was also an Ashkenazi denomination, the Nederlands-Israëlitisch Kerkgenootschap (NIK), in which the Amsterdam congregation held the dominant position it had craved. This kept that congregation, the country's largest, within the fold. Furthermore, the concession was made that no centralized administration would be established; instead, the congregations would enjoy a higher level of autonomy than they had had since the introduction of the 'Israelite hierarchy' in 1821. 13 The congregations in the colonies were overlooked in the new regulations. That made them formally independent of the 'mother country' after 1870, although in practice the Portuguese congregations in Surinam and Curação still turned to the Amsterdam Portuguese kehilah for guidance, as their Ashkenazi sister congregations did to the NIK and the Amsterdam congregation (the NIHS).

Meanwhile, the structures of the PIK and NIK developed straightforwardly out of those of the undivided Jewish denomination. The PIK had a Chief Commission and the NIK a Permanent Commission (PC) with five to seven members. Since the members were no longer appointed by the authorities, more power within the NIK shifted to the regions. They sent delegates to a Central Commission (CC), which served as a kind of parliament for Dutch Jewry. The CC then elected a 'government', the PC, from among its members. Since the NIK mainly had responsibilities related to the common interests of its members, such as representing them to the public authorities and society, it had a more independent and political nature than would have been possible before then.

The new regulations stipulated that as much as possible was to be arranged at the regional level. This continued a trend, which had begun earlier, of each region taking on its own character within the spectrum of the denomination's moderate Orthodox identity. That led to considerable diversity among regions, especially when it came to new religious ideas (which were often introduced on a small scale).

Many different reformers had demanded changes in the electoral system of the Jewish congregations. The large congregations still worked with an early modern structure in which membership was limited to descendants of the congregation's founders plus those who had paid a large sum. These 'matriculated members' were the only ones who had both passive and active voting rights, as well as the right to parti-

the Constituting Convention (Constituerende Vergadering). See also H. I. Coppenhagen, 'Het ontstaan van het Nederlandsch Israëlietisch Kerkgenootschap', *De Vrijdagavond*, 8/1 (1932), 348–51, 366–67, 378–81, 398–400; 8/2, 13–15, 30–2, 42–6.

¹³ D. M. Sluys, 'Uit de geschiedenis van de tot standkoming van het Reglement voor het Ned. Israël. Kerkgenootschap', *Nieuw Israëlietisch Weekblad*, 14 Aug. 1925.

cipate in the full range of religious ceremonies, and who could be buried in the more prestigious cemeteries (in the case of Ashkenazi Amsterdam, Muiderberg or Overveen) or the more prominent sections of burial grounds (as was the case in Ouderkerk and The Hague, for instance). The vast majority of urban Jews did not descend from the founders of their congregations or have the means to pay for membership. They formed a separate category, the 'congregants'. Those were members whose rights and duties were limited, who often could not afford seats in the synagogue, and who were buried in cemeteries for the poor, such as Zeeburg. This membership system, modelled after the old, exclusive citizenship (poorterschap) system in Dutch towns and cities, was increasingly at odds with the gradual democratization of the country's electoral system. From 1870 onwards, Jewish congregations in the NIK were free to make their own policies. But the NIHS in Amsterdam would go on clinging to the old structure until 1945, always maintaining a clear separation between the emerging proletariat and the upper and middle classes. 14 What did change after 1870, in emulation of a similar move in the Dutch Reformed Church, was that voting members were permitted to form political parties. This step revealed a variety of ideological currents, ranging from Liberal to Orthodox, which fought for seats on the local synagogue council (kerkenraad) and formed coalitions on the synagogue board (kerkbestuur).

The long stage from 1848 to 1870 was marked by the gradual withdrawal of the public authorities, who urged the Jewish community to move rapidly towards independence, and also by deep divisions between Dutch Jews about the future. The discussion focused on organizational structures, but underlying it were profound disagreements about religious identity and political preference. Yet the common ground for all the participants in these debates was their loyalty to the Dutch state and the House of Orange. Given this fact, the Nederlands-Israëlietisch Kerkgenootschap (literally: 'Dutch Israelite Denomination') had a singularly appropriate name; the aim was to be both Dutch and Jewish at once, and the combination of the two was thought to provide a unique and privileged identity. The best of Dutch culture (toleration, reasonableness, and moderation) and the best of Judaism (a long and venerable tradition, morality, and studiousness) were merged in the personality of the 'ideal Dutch Jew'.

The separation of Church and State not only led to a reorganization, but also left Jews free, at least in theory, to found new congregations outside the existing ones. The lesson the state had learned from the failed attempts to oppose the Secession of 1834 (a split in the Dutch Reformed Church) was that citizens were in principle free to start their own congregations and denominations. After 1848, Dutch Jewry had schisms and new congregations of their own—most of all in the eastern provinces. There, family ties heightened the awareness of the situation in the German states. where there were frequent local schisms between Orthodox and Reform congregations. The issues at

¹⁴ B. Wallet, 'Leden, congreganten en vreemdelingen: Zeeburg en de sociale geschiedenis van joods Amsterdam', in id., *Zeeburg: Geschiedenis van een joodse begraafplaats 1714–2014* (Hilversum, 2014), 117–28.

stake in the Dutch schisms were not unrelated to the German debates, but they were less politically and ideologically charged. Prayers were never radically revised by removing all references to the Holy Land, as was sometimes done in Germany. But issues such as the introduction of choral song in the synagogue services led to schisms and secessions in various places, including Groningen (1852), Steenwijk (1853), Delfzijl (1857), Schoonhoven (1863), and Deventer (1869). The Chief Commission and local parnasim could no longer appeal to the state to preserve local unity—by force if necessary.

Integration Processes

The form taken by the Jewish community from 1814 onwards—that of a religious denomination—was intended to give Jews a place in society comparable to that of other religious groups such as Protestants and Catholics. But additional obstacles had to be removed before Jews could take part in society as equals. This observation was made throughout western and central Europe, but the conclusions drawn from it were many and varied. Many German states and the Habsburg empire focused mainly on a process of moral and ethical elevation, to be followed at a later stage, after sufficient acculturation, by political equality. This approach created a strong motivation to integrate among large parts of the Jewish communities in question, but also led to considerable frustration when legal emancipation failed to materialize. The Netherlands, like France, took the opposite route: political emancipation had been achieved in 1796 but had to be followed by the practical integration of the Jewish population. ¹⁵

Various actors in that integration process can be identified: the state, the different strata of the Jewish community, and wider Dutch society. The state and the Jewish elite worked hand in glove to pursue a comprehensive integration policy, in a genuine two-way relationship. The Jewish community was closely involved in the entire process, not just passively, but as an active participant. In the course of the eighteenth century, Dutch Jews had become extensively engaged in Dutch society and politics, a situation that—in combination with a strong Orangist tradition—led to the broad embrace of the new Dutch national identity. Of course, there were tensions surrounding the practical implementation of the integration agenda, but they only rarely related to the fundamental principles behind it.

The integration of the Jews took place within the larger framework of William I's attempts to create a unified state with a shared civil religion, along moderate Enlightenment lines. Although Jews faced special obstacles, there was a sense in which every citizen had to integrate into the new Kingdom that was under construction. The

¹⁵ For a survey of the diverse ways of defining the relationship between emancipation and integration throughout Europe, see J. Frankel and S. J. Zipperstein (eds.), Assimilation and Community: The Jews in Nineteenth-Century Europe (Cambridge, 1992), and P. Birnbaum and I. Katznelson (eds.), Paths of Emancipation: Jews, States, Citizenship (Princeton, 1995).

integration of Jews therefore shows significant parallels with that of Catholics, the Protestant groups that had previously been labelled dissenters, and various regional minorities. The measures taken to promote Jewish integration were based only in part on their particular circumstances; to a much larger degree, they followed from the general policy for all of Dutch society.

The central structure, gradually created from 1814 onwards, became one of the main channels for communicating and implementing integration policy. Furthermore, the Chief Commission, as the summit of Jewish society, was closely involved in developing that policy. The basic principles were set out at an early stage: Jews had to become hard-working, patriotic, and 'civilized' (that is, acculturated) citizens. To that end, the policy combated beggary and vagrancy and sought to implant national values, standards, virtues, and practices in the Jewish community. These general principles were then translated into practical measures, with careful consideration of what was possible in practice and of the gradual nature of integration processes.

One of the greatest obstacles to integration was linguistic in nature. Yiddish was the everyday language of the Ashkenazi Jews, and while it had been strongly influenced by Dutch by this stage, its different nature and separate alphabet nevertheless created a certain distance. The fact that a minority spoke a different language was not in itself a problem; there were far fewer objections to the Portuguese of the Sephardi Jews and the French of the Walloon Reformed. Yiddish, however—like regional languages such as Frisian—was regarded as a 'dialect', as 'jargon'. It was seen neither as purely German nor as purely Hebrew, but—as Mendelssohn had argued in the late eighteenth century—as a typical *Mischsprache* that inevitably kept its speakers from expressing themselves clearly. Minority languages of this type were viewed as obstacles to any sort of social and intellectual development. The fight against Yiddish was not limited to the Netherlands (where it resembled policies on other regional and cultural minorities) but had a transnational component: other Jewish communities in western and central Europe faced similar campaigns.

There were limits to what the state could do to discourage the use of Yiddish. It would have been impractical to ordain from above what language was spoken at home or in the streets, or used in books and periodicals. But the authorities could encourage the use of Dutch, especially by the younger generation, through Jewish education. The measure requiring the least effort was a requirement for Jewish congregations to use Dutch in all their official documents: minutes of meetings, membership rolls, and correspondence. This did not cause any serious difficulties in the cities, where the Jewish elite had spoken the 'national language' since the late eighteenth century. It had a greater impact in rural areas, where some experienced administrators lacked the language skills to continue doing their jobs properly and had to make way for a younger generation, while other Jewish congregations made fruitless attempts to hold on to Yiddish as an official language a little while longer. Until the second half of the nine-

teenth century, some letters and internal documents at the local level were written in Yiddish. But everything visible to outsiders was in Dutch, as the new policy demanded. The only exception made was for a handful of Jewish congregations in the Southern Netherlands and Luxembourg, which received permission to use French instead. ¹⁶

Jewish education became the focal point of the language policy of the state and the Jewish elite. It was widely believed in those circles, as well as among the middle class and some poorer Jews, that the only way for the young generation of Jews to climb the social ladder was by learning to speak Dutch properly. For that reason, the Jewish community was fairly willing to make the transition from Yiddish to Dutch. Even so, there were plenty of practical obstacles. One was a serious shortage of good Dutch-speaking instructors; many Jewish teachers still came from the German states and Polish territories, as in the days of the *ancien régime*. Yiddish was the lingua franca that tied together Jews from London to the Russian empire, and such teachers wandered this realm of 'Ashkenaz' in search of work. This was a source of great frustration to the state and the Jewish elite, since it undermined their attempts to promote integration. Only a corps of Dutch Jewish teachers could make the Jewish community a fully-fledged part of the Dutch nation.¹⁷

Meanwhile, the very existence of Jewish schools was a rather peculiar arrangement. In 1806 a new Education Act had secularized the schools for the poor (*armenscholen*) that existed at the time. From then on, religious denominations played no role in education; the schools were 'public', open to all children. For the Jewish community, however, an exception was made. To take in large numbers of Jewish children, the schools for the poor would have had to alter their curriculum substantially. Although their educational programme was no longer linked to a particular Christian denomination, it was still generally Christian in character, as much as it had ever been. To keep it that way, the public authorities established Jewish state schools for the poor alongside the ones 'with the Bible' for all other religious groups. Both school systems were financed and supervised by the state, but each served a different community and was permitted to teach a different religion. ¹⁸

¹⁶ B. Wallet, "End of the Jargon-Scandal": The Decline and Fall of Yiddish in the Netherlands (1796–1886)', *Jewish History*, 20 (2006), 333–48; id., 'Een taal die niet mocht bestaan: West-Jiddisch in de zuidelijke Nederlanden (1791–1839)', *Les Cahiers de la Mémoire contemporaine/Bijdragen tot de eigentijdse Herinnering*, 8 (2008), 175–92; I. E. Zwiep, 'Yiddish, Dutch and Hebrew: Language Theory, Language Ideology and the Emancipation of Nineteenth-Century Dutch Jewry', *StR* 34 (2000), 56–73.

¹⁷ B. Wallet, "Vorming, beschaving en heil": Joodse godsdienstonderwijzers en de religiegeschiedenis van joods Nederland, 1815–1980', *Documentatieblad voor de Nederlandse Kerkgeschiedenis na* 1800, 36/78 (2013), 66–91.

¹⁸ The reconstruction of the history of Jewish education is based on Wallet, *Nieuwe Nederlanders*, 137–41; N. L. Dodde with M. M. P. Stultjens, 'Joods onderwijs in Nederland van 1815 tot 1940', in H. Berg (ed.), *De Gelykstaat der Joden: Inburgering van een minderheid* (Zwolle, 1996), 67–80; R. Reinsma, 'Pogingen tot assimilatie en emancipatie van het Joodse kind in Nederland na 1796: Israëlitische scholen onder de koningen Willem I en II', *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis*, 77 (1964), 448–65.

Alongside the schools for the poor, there were also schools for the middle and upper classes. The parents paid tuition, and the state did not have any supervisory role. The Jewish community had very few of these private schools. Many middle-class Jewish children attended 'regular' private schools, such as French or Latin school, and the parents arranged for extracurricular Hebrew, Torah, and prayer-book classes.

It was decided in 1817 that state-funded Jewish schools for the poor would no longer use Yiddish but Dutch. This established an official standard, but one that was still far from practicable. The next step was therefore to lay the groundwork, by developing good Dutch-language educational materials for Jewish schoolchildren and training a corps of Dutch Jewish teachers. Generous grants were offered for writing textbooks. The result was a large number of introductory works about Hebrew, the prayer-book, Jewish (mainly biblical) history, and the geography of the Holy Land. Some authors are especially noteworthy, such as Simon Ephraim Heigmans, David Abraham Lissaur, Samuël Israël Mulder, and Israël Waterman. 19

It was not until the 1830s that the conditions were in place and the decree of 1817 could gradually be enforced. In principle, foreign instructors were no longer allowed to teach at Jewish schools unless they had sufficiently mastered the Dutch language. In 1837, alongside the general educational inspector who supervised the level of teaching in the 'general subjects', a special Jewish inspector was appointed. This official was a teacher of religion in his own right, a prolific author of educational materials, and a prominent participant in Jewish administrative and intellectual life: Dr Samuël Israël Mulder. He visited all the Jewish schools in the country—and even some across the border—and reported at length on the quality of the education, the level of the teachers, and what the pupils had learned. He devoted special attention to the use of the 'old gibberish'—in other words, Yiddish. Where Mulder observed that it was still in use, the Chief Commission reprimanded the school board and urgently requested that they switch to Dutch or lose their funding. Thanks to these measures, Jewish education was soon in the Dutch language, and the new generation grew up speaking the 'language of the fatherland'. A number of schools nonetheless went on using Yiddish, at least for some purposes, until the 1850s.

Although the nationalization of Jewish education was a decisive step, an even more radical measure was put into practice after 1857. One implication of the constitutional revision of 1848 was that the Primary Education Act had to be revised so that there were no longer two varieties of state school; instead, education had to be available to all children on genuinely equal terms. An Act of Parliament of 1857 gave this the force of law, although it retained the old phrasing: state-run education inculcated 'all social and Christian virtues'. A generally Christian ethic was seen as a binding force for the entire nation, and even the Jewish liberal member of parliament Michel Henri Godefroi

¹⁹ For an overview, see J. H. Coppenhagen, *De Israëlitische 'kerk' en de staat der Nederlanden, hun betrekkingen tussen 1814 en 1870: Een bibliografische benadering* (Amsterdam, 1988), 55–70.

(1813–83) agreed that this was in harmony with the Jewish tradition. But the new Act prohibited explicitly Christian religious content and practices in the state school system. As a result of this Act, Jewish state schools no longer received state funding. The Jewish congregations had to decide whether to take financial responsibility for the schools, effectively privatizing them, or to shut them down. They chose the latter option, in the firm belief that if Jewish children attended the same 'regular' schools as other children, it would advance the community's integration into society. After the transition from Yiddish to Dutch, they felt it was time for comprehensive, practical integration. This decision, supported by the rabbinate, led to the rapid closure after 1857 of the seventy-four official Jewish schools then in operation.²⁰

Dutch Jews' willingness to give up Jewish schools and start attending state schools attests to the depth of the Jewish community's involvement in the liberal political agenda. Dutch Jews gave the liberal movement credit for emancipation, greater liberties, and practical forms of integration. The liberals, for their part, used the Jewish community as a political lever for transforming Dutch society. Integration and acceptance of Jews-in education, politics, and social life-became a cornerstone of the liberal political programme. But this political alliance, strengthened by the fact that some Jewish leaders were active in liberal politics, also revealed the limits of social integration.²¹ Conservative forces—which since 1848 had watched Jews claim an ever more conspicuous role in society and take their place in public frameworks—had begun to put up more resistance. The Jewish theme became increasingly prominent in anti-liberal rhetoric, which appealed to anti-Jewish prejudice and negative stereotypes. The schoolstrijd, a fierce national debate about state funding for religious schools, entered a new stage in 1857, and one point of criticism was Jewish participation in the state system. Conservative Calvinists and Roman Catholics were deeply disappointed that, unlike them, Jews did not set up their own confessional schools but preferred state schools with a liberal perspective. This reflected the fact that the Jewish emancipation process was focused on opening up their closed community so that they could participate in society at every level, while for conservative Calvinists and Roman Catholics, in contrast, emancipation meant building up their own tight-knit communities.

But the transition to state-run education did not mean that the Jewish community gave up religious education completely. Alongside the regular educational programme, separate 'schools of Israelite religion' offered 'Jewish lessons' after school and on Sundays. In those schools children learned Hebrew, as they always had. In view of the language's religious and classical nature, the lessons were not seen as a threat, but as

²⁰ K. Hofmeester, '"Een teeder en belangrijk punt": Opinies over openbaar onder-wijs in joodse kring, 1857–1898', in H. te Velde and H. Verhage (eds.), *De eenheid en de delen: Zuilvorming, onderwijs en natievorming in Nederland* 1850–1900 (Amsterdam, 1996), 157–76; M. Rietveld-van Wingerden and S. Miedema, 'Freedom of Education and Dutch Jewish Schools in the Mid-Nineteenth Century', *Jewish History*, 17 (2003), 31–54.

²¹ K. de Leeuw, 'Joodse liberalen in de eerste jaren van de schoolstrijd (1848–1857)', StR 26 (1992), 97–124.

the equivalent of teaching Greek or Latin. Knowledge of Hebrew even came to be seen as a sign of the scholarship and cultural advancement of the Jewish community. Meanwhile, it was quickly concluded that this overstuffed curriculum—religious education alongside state schools—was putting particular pressure on the Jewish lessons and leading a growing number of children to drop out of the extracurricular classes. For this reason, some chief rabbis and leaders of the Orthodox faction tentatively reopened the question of education towards the end of the nineteenth century.

One reason that integration had not been strongly opposed from within the Jewish community was that the nineteenth-century nationalization process looked like a seamless continuation of the eighteenth-century politicization of the community. The choice made in the *ancien régime* to support the Orangists, the social engagement that this entailed, and Jewish communities' identification with their own cities and regions all provided a firm foundation for the processes of integration. Of course, there was a new political context—the nation-state—but that state was ruled by the House of Orange. The fact that the government's decrees were signed by the king silenced a good deal of criticism from the start. The Dutch Jews were wholehearted participants in the special days of prayer, celebration, and thanksgiving dedicated to the House of Orange, as well as in new national occasions of remembrance such as the annual Waterloo Day. Orangism was one element of continuity between eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Dutch Jews and opened the way to integration and participation.

In 1830 an opportunity arose for them to demonstrate their loyalty to their royal house and attachment to the Netherlands, when a liberal protest against William I's policies in the Southern Netherlands set off the Belgian Revolution. Jews volunteered in above-average numbers for the armed forces that were sent south to restore order in the Ten-Day Campaign. The Jewish soldiers who defended the citadel of Antwerp, with Baron Chassé as the commanding general, were showered with praise. The Jewish community also put great energy into writing and reciting poems, pamphlets, and sermons that roundly condemned the ungrateful Belgians. For example, the Amsterdam intellectual Mozes Lemans wrote a historical poem in Hebrew, *Pesha Belgi* ('The Sin of Belgium'), while Isaac Jojada Cohen, a teacher in Groningen, produced a bilingual *Uitboezeming eens Hebreeërs na den tiendaagschen roemrijken veldtogt, tegen den vijand van Vorst en Vaderland* ('Outpouring of a Hebrew after the Glorious Ten-Day Campaign against the Enemy of our King and Fatherland', 1831).

In other regions, however, this was a tense time. In the early days of the revolution, it was not yet entirely clear which side North Brabant would take. There was considerable sympathy among the mostly Catholic population for the 'Belgians', who shared their religion. Jews were seen as an extension of the 'King and Fatherland'; for that reason, the windows of the synagogue in Eindhoven were smashed. On the other hand, the arrival of small numbers of Jewish soldiers who were quartered in North Brabant led to the further growth of Jewish life in the province. It was the Jews in Limburg

who experienced the greatest tumult; they were all declared Belgian in 1830, except for those in Maastricht, but nine years later, in 1839, they—along with the rest of the province—became part of the Netherlands and the 'Israelite denomination' once more.²²

Most Dutch Jews were poor, and very open to integration as long as it promised greater social mobility for the next generation. It was widely accepted that this would involve learning the Dutch language—and giving up Yiddish. Only on the margins of the Jewish community did a few critics complain, generally for practical reasons: how were they supposed to keep in touch with relatives and wider networks throughout 'Ashkenaz' if they no longer shared the Yiddish language? But these objections were quickly brushed aside, partly because German and French Jews were also saying farewell to Yiddish. At the same time, successful examples of social mobility presented the attractive prospect of Dutch Jews attaining positions that had always been closed to them and enjoying respect and social influence. 'Social climbers' were cherished and honoured, and those admitted to chivalric orders by the royal house even received a dispensation to wear their medals—which bore the sign of the cross—in the synagogue.

While integration policy in the first half of the nineteenth century had been focused mainly on the Jewish community as a whole, which had to find its place in the new majority culture of Enlightenment Protestantism, the emphasis shifted in the second half of the century. Increasingly, Jews became part of diverse social groups and political movements, and they continued their integration process within these wider social groups. While the elite and the middle class participated fully in the liberal political movement, by the end of the century some Jewish workers were oriented towards the socialist movement. From that time onwards, separate political and social trajectories were clearly visible within Jewish congregations, and it took a steady hand at the wheel to hold the community together.

The spectrum of responses to modernity, emancipation, and integration includes what Todd Endelman has called radical assimilation: the decision to blend into the dominant culture as fully as possible, deliberately leaving behind one's Jewish background. In the nineteenth century, a mixed marriage almost always implied this type of deliberate departure from the Jewish community.²³ This situation was not entirely

²² B. Wallet, 'Belgian Independence, Orangism, and Jewish Identity: The Jewish Communities in Belgium during the Belgian Revolution (1830–39)', in J. Frishman, D. J. Wertheim, I. de Haan, and J. Cahen (eds.), Borders and Boundaries in and around Dutch Jewish History (Amsterdam, 2011), 167–81; id., 'Brabantse joden tussen Oranje en "le peuple belge": Migratie en de joodse gemeenschappen in Brabant, 1815–1839', Noordbrabants Historisch Jaarboek, 26 (2009), 170–89. For the continuation of the history of the Jews in the southern Netherlands, see J.-P. Schreiber, Politique et religion: Le Consistoire central israélite de Belgique au XIXe siècle (Brussels, 1995).

²³ T. Endelman, Leaving the Jewish Fold: Conversion and Radical Assimilation in Modern Jewish History (Princeton, 2015); P. Tammes, 'Abandoning Judaism: A Life History Perspective on Disaffiliation and Conversion to Christianity among Prewar Amsterdam Jews', Advances in Life Course Research, 17 (2012), 81–92.

unattested among Dutch Jews, but it was relatively infrequent. Likewise, very few Dutch Jews made the radical choice to reject Judaism, although the few who did were objects of fascination. For example, the utopian socialist Hartog J. Berlin founded the association De Humaniteit ('Humanity') in 1867, because he felt that De Dageraad ('The Dawn') was too tolerant of religion.²⁴

There was greater interest in the alternative: conversion to one of the Christian denominations. Again, the numbers were not large—unlike in certain other countries, especially in central Europe, where some Jews who had not yet reaped the benefits of emancipation used baptism as their 'ticket to European culture' (in the words of Heinrich Heine). In the Netherlands, baptism was not a requirement for particular jobs and positions, and the few converts to Christianity seem to have been motivated by inner religious conviction. Although these young people were small in number, they occasioned a great deal of attention because they came from prominent families. Many descendants of the great eighteenth-century leader Benjamin Cohen converted to Christianity.²⁵ And in 1822, the president of the Chief Commission had to accept that his nephew, Abraham Capadose, who was part of his household, chose to be baptized with his cousin Isaac da Costa. Their example was followed by other Portuguese Jews, including the president of the congregation in The Hague, Dr Jacob Benjamin de Pinto, and the politician jhr. Mozes Salvador. These converts joined the dominant Dutch Reformed Church, as did the Philips family (from Zaltbommel and later Eindhoven), the Diamant family (from Breda), and Philippus Samuël van Ronkel, the son of a Jewish intellectual from Groningen. But Samuël Philippus Lipman, a lawyer and former member of the Chief Commission, instead chose Catholicism. In practically every case, the converts became dedicated members of their new religion. Strikingly, in contrast to the usual practice in the ancien régime and among many converts in central Europe, they kept their Jewish names and continued to regard themselves as Israelites. In some cases—for instance, in Isaac da Costa's circle—they looked for a middle way between conventional Judaism and Christianity.

This period also saw the rise of the organized conversion of Jews, initiated and coordinated by Anglican and Presbyterian missionary societies in England and Scotland. They had a preference for missionaries of Jewish ancestry, such as Carl August Ferdinand Schwartz (1817–70) and Christian Wilhelm Hirsch Pauli (1800–77). These societies organized activities in the Jewish quarters of Amsterdam, but judging by the reports to the head office, they were relatively unsuccessful, converting some 400 to 500 people in all. Great controversy surrounded an attempt in 1846 to open a missionary Christian nursery school in the Jewish district. This led to a swift response and

²⁴ D. Bos, Waarachtige volksvrienden: De vroege socialistische beweging in Amsterdam 1848–1894 (Amsterdam, 2001), 95–6.

²⁵ D. E. Cohen, The Cohen Book: The History of a Dutch Jewish Family from the 17th to the 20th Century (Amsterdam, 2016).

prompted the Jewish community to establish its own nursery schools. In 1858 Samuël Abraham Hirsch, the brother of Acting Chief Rabbi Joseph S. Hirsch, attempted to murder Schwartz. The attempt failed and the boy was arrested; the incident did not lead to friction between the communities.²⁶

Jews had a special status in the colonies. At first, they did not have the same legal status as Jews in the mother country. Until emancipation in 1825, they took the traditional form of a 'Jewish Nation'. In the case of the colonies, emancipation entailed that the Jewish communities no longer enjoyed special privileges but that Jews instead had the same rights as other 'white' citizens. This was in some respects a loss. At the same time, however, it permitted them to participate fully in politics, an opportunity seized by some, especially in the Portuguese Jewish elite. In political, social, and economic life, the Jewish population was part of the privileged white upper crust. The abolition of slavery was a cause of great friction in the Surinamese Jewish community. Advocates of abolition directed their harshest criticism at Jewish slave-owners; anti-Jewish sentiment and concern for the welfare of enslaved people went hand in hand. When the colony's enslaved people were finally set free in 1863, the slave-owners were compensated. In 1849 there were 683 Portuguese and 681 Ashkenazi Jews in Surinam; in Curação, 829 Portuguese Jews were registered. The old Jewish community in Jodensavanne was formally disbanded in 1865, when the Torah scrolls were taken to Paramaribo.27

The colonial communities looked to the mother country for spiritual leadership. In 1858 Mozes Juda Lewenstein took up his duties as chief rabbi of the two Jewish congregations in Paramaribo. Although he had been expected to pursue a moderate course, the opposite was true. He imposed stricter rules, was critical of changes to the liturgy, and opposed the tolerant attitude of the Surinamese Jews towards mixed marriages. The 'creolized' Jews (that is, those of mixed ancestry), who were permitted to take part in Jewish life freely, had a formidable antagonist in Lewenstein. He died in 1864, while embroiled in an intense conflict. In 1855 the Portuguese congregation in Curaçao had appointed Aron Mendes Chumaceiro as chief rabbi. Chumaceiro was an intellectual who had played a prominent role in Amsterdam's Portuguese Jewish congregation and in the Dutch Jewish community. A supporter of the policy of integration, he was one of the pioneers of Dutch-language sermons but opposed the

²⁶ J. Meijer, Isaac da Costa's weg naar het Christendom: Bijdrage tot de geschiedenis der Joodsche problematiek in Nederland (Amsterdam, 1946); id., Martelgang of cirkelgang: Isaac da Costa als Joods romanticus (Paramaribo, 1954); B. Wallet, 'Het Réveil als "joodsche Hervorming", in F. van Lieburg (ed.), Opwekking van de natie: Het protestantse Réveil in Nederland (Hilversum, 2012), 185–210.

²⁷ R. A. J. van Lier, 'The Jewish Community in Surinam: A Historical Survey', in R. Cohen (ed.), *The Jewish Nation in Surinam: Historical Essays* (Amsterdam, 1982), 19–27; W. Vink, *Creole Jews: Negotiating Community in Colonial Suriname* (Leiden, 2010); J.-M. Cohen (ed.), *Joden in de Cariben: Vier eeuwen joodse geschiedenis in Suriname en Curação* (Zutphen, 2015), especially the chapters by Wieke Vink and Josette Capriles Goldish.

rise of Reform Judaism. Some of his descendants remained in Curação and worked in the interests of the island and of Jewish community life there.²⁸

Social and Economic Mobility

Whereas the political and legal emancipation of Dutch Jews took place in 1796 and was implemented in a growing number of laws and regulations after that, the repositioning of Jews in Dutch society was a separate, although interwoven, process. The state guaranteed the equal treatment of Jews under the law and equal access to public and political services, but the degree of acceptance of Jews among the general population and in civil society was a completely different story. An unwelcoming attitude towards Jews remained in evidence in a wide range of social circles.

Dutch society in the period in question was characterized by a strong sense of class identity, and social life was often regulated by implicit codes of conduct. For instance, the political sphere was restricted to the nobility and the patriciate (that is, the traditional, hereditary governing class) until 1848, when the wealthy middle class also became eligible for political office. This class sense also obtained within the Jewish community, in which a small elite of Jewish aristocrats—three Portuguese Jewish families, the Lopes Suassos (accepted as nobility in 1818), the Teixeiras (de Mattos) (ennobled in 1817), and the De Salvadors (ennobled in 1821)—formed a Jewish patriciate that took the lead in making and administering community policies. Until 1848, it was also these families that supplied the Jewish local councillors, who were expected to represent their entire community. For example, Jacob Mendes de Leon (1784–1842) represented the Jews of Amsterdam, and Salomon Israël Themans became an alderman in Oldenzaal in 1831.²⁹

After 1848, there was room for social climbers, and Jewish liberals managed to win seats not only on local and provincial councils but also, for the first time since 1798, in parliament. The moderate liberal lawyer Michel Henri Godefroi, who had joined the Chief Commission in 1844 and later became its president, was elected to the Lower House (Tweede Kamer) in 1849. He would remain there until 1881. Twice, following the 1852 and 1864 elections, he was joined by a second Jewish member: the radical liberal Ahasueros van Nierop, also a lawyer. Godefroi was an influential, widely respected authority on legal matters. Thorbecke had hoped to make him a member of government in 1852, to make it clear that from that time onwards Jews could hold even the very highest political offices. But King William III had opposed the plan; with the April Movement against Catholic emancipation fresh in his mind, the king decided

²⁸ Vink, Creole Jews, 96–9; J. Meijer, M. J. Lewenstein's Opperrabbinaat te Paramaribo (1857/8–1864) (Amsterdam, 1959).

²⁹ B. Wallet, 'Political Participation of Dutch Jews in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century, 1814–1848', *Zutot: Perspectives on Jewish Culture*, 3 (2003), 173–7.

the time was not yet ripe to appoint a Jewish minister. By 1860, the king no longer objected, and the way was clear for Godefroi to become the justice minister in two successive, short-lived governments. Godefroi was a cautious politician, who sought mainly to serve his own district and the public interest and made his own district contribution to public debate, drawing on his expertise in constitutional law. At the same time, he realized that as the only Jewish member of parliament (for most of his career there) he bore a special responsibility for defending national and international Jewish interests. He made judicious use of his influence as a parliamentarian to raise the issues of the meagre state contribution to the Israelite denomination and of the underprivileged status of Jews in Switzerland (1863) and Romania (1872 and 1876). 30

Jewish participation in politics grew out of the community's formal emancipation and the constitutional revision of 1848. Although there was some scattered resistance to Jewish political participation, the main barriers lay not in the political but in the social and economic domain. In many European countries, Freemasonry had played a remarkable role in breaking down social prejudices from the late eighteenth century onwards. While Jews were formally excluded from many clubs and associations, Freemasonry constituted what Jacob Katz once described as a semi-neutral society, a place where a diverse range of Christians and Jews could relate to each other as equals. Freemasonry played a significant role in the social acceptance of Jews in many parts of Europe, including the Habsburg empire, the German states, and Great Britain. But the Dutch situation was different. The early emancipation of 1796 seemed to have done away with the necessity for a neutral space of that kind, and only a small number of Jews became Freemasons—mainly Jews from the elite and the upper middle class. For instance, Mozes Salomon Asser was a member of La Bien Aimée Lodge from 1802 to 1810, as was his son Carolus Asser (from 1802 to 1814). Not only was there relatively little need for Freemasonry to play an emancipatory role in the Netherlands, but some Dutch Masonic lodges in fact turned away Jews. At first, Jews could not become members of La Paix Lodge, for example, and when the new lodge Post Nubila Lux was established in 1851 under a Jewish leader (M. S. Polak), the other Amsterdam lodges refused to recognize it. Post Nubila Lux was not admitted to the organization until 1886. Participating in Freemasonry was not uncontroversial among Ashkenazi Jews, but among Portuguese Jews it was quite routine; many board members of Sephardi congregations were Freemasons. Louis Landsberg, the chief rabbi in Limburg, who served as the spiritual leader of the southern region from 1860 to 1908, was an enthusiastic Freemason from 1873 onwards.31

³⁰ F. C. Brasz, 'De joodse stem in de Nederlandse gemeentepolitiek (1851–1940)', *StR* 19 (1985), 299–311; K. Hofmeester, 'Jewish Parliamentary Representatives in the Netherlands, 1848–1914: Crossing Borders, Encountering Boundaries?', in J. Frishman et al. (eds.), *Borders and Boundaries in and around Dutch Jewish History* (Amsterdam, 2011), 65–80.

³¹ A. Caransa, Vrijmetselarij en jodendom: De wereld een tempel (Hilversum, 2001); J. Katz, Jews and Free-masons in Europe 1723–1939 (Cambridge, Mass., 1970).

Participation by Jews was controversial not only to some Freemasons, but also to other leading 'enlightenment' societies. The Maatschappij tot Nut van het Algemeen (until 1855), the Amsterdam society Felix Meritis ('Happy through Merit', until 1862), and the Rotterdam club Amicitia all appealed to their 'general Christian' identity as a reason for denying membership to Jews. 32 Jews responded by founding parallel organizations that undertook similar activities in their own Jewish circles. For instance, the Maatschappij tot Nut der Israëlieten (Society for the Benefit of the Israelites), founded in 1849, aimed to promote the education, 'civilization', and social mobility of the Jewish population. Through charitable funds, a periodical, and practical initiatives, this society endeavoured to improve the status of Jews in civil society. By 1850 it had six chapters (in Amsterdam, The Hague, Rotterdam, Gorinchem, Winschoten, and Arnhem) and four hundred members.

There was every reason for that: while the emancipation of 1796 had, in principle, removed all barriers to a broader economic basis, in practice very little progress had been made. The entrenched economic structures resisted change, and Jewish children tended to take up their parents' occupations. This led to a high concentration in retail, the diamond industry, moneylending, and the food sector; taken together, these formed an ethnic enclave.³³ Furthermore, the general economic malaise of the early nineteenth century left the Jewish community hard hit and in considerable poverty. Amsterdam had the largest population of poor Jews in western Europe. While a quarter of the Jews in London received permanent or temporary support in 1850, the same was true of more than half of Amsterdam's 20,000 Ashkenazi Jews in 1817, and by mid-century that figure had risen to three-quarters of the total of 22,000. Although the definition of poverty varied from community to community and it is therefore difficult to make a meaningful comparison, this does give some impression of the extent of the problem. There can be no doubt that both the Ashkenazi and the Portuguese Jews had a poverty rate well above the Amsterdam average of 17 per cent.³⁴

Outside Amsterdam, too, Jews were often identified with poverty and pauperism. Between 1814 and 1820, numerous decisions were made at the provincial level that targeted foreigners, vagabonds, and beggars. Sometimes these supposed threats to public safety were openly described as 'Jews'. These poverty-stricken Jews wandered from place to place, sometimes supporting themselves by working at carnivals, doing

³² A. S. van Nierop, Proeve van betoog dat de niet-toelating der Israëliten in de Mij. tot Nut van 't Algemeen strijdig is met haar oorsprong, doel en strekking (Amsterdam, 1834). S. Coenen-Snyder, Building a Public Judaism: Synagogues and Jewish Identity in Nineteenth-Century Europe (Cambridge, Mass., 2012).

³³ The earliest detailed survey we have of the occupational pattern of the Amsterdam Jews dates from 1851. It shows that more than 30% worked in the commercial and retail sectors and 12% in the diamond industry. P. Tammes, "'Hack, Pack, Sack": Occupational Structure, Status and Mobility of Jews in Amsterdam, 1851–1941', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 43/1 (2012), 1–26.

³⁴ K. Sonnenberg-Stern, *Emancipation and Poverty: The Ashkenazi Jews of Amsterdam*, 1796–1850 (Basingstoke, 2000), 91–7.

conjuring tricks, or singing songs, and often seeking poor relief from local Jewish congregations. As early as 1821, J. ter Pelkwijk, a member of the provincial executive (Gedeputeerde Staten) in Overijssel, expressed his fear of a flood of indigent Jews from the east after the Jewish congregation in Zwolle announced plans to increase its financial support for Jews who passed through the city.

Meanwhile, traditional Jewish occupations were the source of some of the changes in the community's economic structure. The hawkers who roamed the countryside selling knick-knacks and manufactured goods became the proprietors of Jewish cloth shops. A hawker would settle in a town or village central to a region and, in his early days there, would not only set up a shop but also continue going from door to door. A case in point is the Van Blijdesteijn fabric shop in the Betuwe region, founded in Ophemert in 1833. Alongside cloth shops, the textile industry was also a source of Jewish economic mobility. Jewish vendors became manufacturers and were among the early adopters of the industrial revolution in the Netherlands. Steam engines in Jewish textile factories replaced manual labour that had been done at home by many rural women. Some Jewish textile companies were dominant economic forces in their town or village, such as the Salomonson firm in Nijverdal or the Spanjaard company in Borne. Many Jews found employment in the textile sector, especially in Twente, where Enschede was home to the Menko, Van Dam, Van Gelderen, and Rozendaal firms. ³⁵

Kosher shops had traditionally been the main infrastructure of a Jewish community. The presence of kosher food was what made further Jewish settlement possible. A kosher butcher's shop was often the first Jewish business in a new place. By the nineteenth century, the Netherlands therefore had a fine-meshed network of kosher butchers, who served not only the local Jewish community but also a broader clientele that was important to their business. These kosher shops developed into factories, which often produced both kosher and non-kosher products. In Geffen and then, from 1858 onwards, in Oss, Zadok van den Bergh built a butter empire, which became a great international success after shifting to margarine in 1872.

Jews remained involved in moneylending and finance, as they traditionally had been. This sector was in upheaval on the international scale, with the rise of major Jewish banking houses such as those of the Rothschild, Bischoffsheim, and Péreire families. In the first half of the nineteenth century, Amsterdam managed to retain some of its standing in international finance, but from 1850 onwards, the city's importance waned. A number of leading Jewish bankers, such as Bischoffsheim, Königswarter, and Goldschmidt, left Amsterdam—most of them going to Paris, London, and Stuttgart. Those who remained put new emphasis on the national market. But bankers such as the Lehren brothers—Hirschel Lehren, Akiba Lehren (PLATE 45), and Jakob Meijer

³⁵ H. Berg, T. Wijsenbeek, and E. Fischer (eds.), Venter, fabriqueur, fabrikant: Joodse ondernemers en ondernemingen in Nederland 1796–1940 (Amsterdam, 1994).

Lehren—and Lodewijk Pincoffs and Abraham Carel Wertheim (PLATE 46) continued to link the Dutch market to the international financial sector.³⁶

While the traditional Jewish occupations provided stepping stones to economic mobility for some community members, others tried their luck in new sectors. It was relatively easy for Jews to build careers in science and academia. Rehuel Labatto had been an instructor since 1842 and Salomon Abraham Bleekrode since 1846 at the engineering academy (Koninklijke Akademie ter Opleiding van Burgerlijke Ingenieurs) in Delft. In 1851 Izaac van Deen was appointed as a physiology professor at the University of Groningen, and in 1858, Joël E. Goudsmit became the first Jew appointed as a professor of Roman law in Leiden. In 1862 Tobias Michel Carel Asser, of the famous Asser family of legal experts, became a professor at the Athenaeum Illustre, the predecessor of the University of Amsterdam. Although Jewish physicians were a familiar sight in the early modern period (and remained so in the nineteenth century, when notable names included Immanuel Capadose, Samuël Elias Stein, and Samuël Sarphati), it was an adjustment for many people in the nineteenth-century Netherlands to find Jews working as lawyers and in the court system. From 1861 onwards, Aaron Adolf de Pinto was a senior official at the justice ministry, and his brother Abraham became the landsadvocaat, the government's principal legal adviser.

The media were another new field that opened up. The new freedoms guaranteed by the constitution of 1848 led to a sharp increase in the number of daily and weekly newspapers and magazines. The integration policy of the previous years, with its emphasis on good education, began to bear fruit. Jews had acquired the skills and the command of the Dutch language required for success as a journalist, an editor or editor-in-chief, or a writer. One pioneer was Jakob Belinfante, who edited the *Staatscourant* (the government gazette) from 1807 to 1837. In 1844 Hartog Hijman Tels became the editor-in-chief of a recently established liberal newspaper, the *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, which he ran until 1889. A year later, the paper's liberal rival, the *Algemeen Handelsblad* in Amsterdam, also hired a Jewish editor-in-chief: Louis Keyzer (who like Tels was a lawyer by training). And finally, the conservative *Dagblad van Zuid-Holland en 's-Gravenhage* was under the leadership of Izaak Jacob Lion.

Jews also took an increasing interest in the arts. The violinist Gerson Binger (1774–1841) rose to prominence in the late eighteenth century, but his career later took a downturn, and he ended his life as an impoverished alcoholic in London. The violinist Salomon Gans (1784–1850) and the cellist Simon Ganz (1787–1861) were more successful, playing pivotal roles in the musical life of their respective cities, The Hague and Rotterdam. Bernard Koch (1791–1858) was the concert director for the Italian Opera in Amsterdam and wrote operas such as *Moeder de Gans* ('Mother Goose'), *Der hölzerne Sabel* ('The Wooden Sabre'), and *Das gestohlene Lammchen* ('The Stolen Lamb'). His

³⁶ C. Aust, 'Between Amsterdam and Warsaw: Commercial Networks of the Ashkenazic Mercantile Elite in Central Europe', *Jewish History*, 27 (2013), 41–71.

pupil, the composer and director Aaron Wolf Berlijn (1817–70), who won great popularity, composed both for the general public and for the synagogue liturgy. Some of the latter works remained part of the standard repertoire of Dutch <code>hazanim</code> (cantors) in the twentieth century. Painting, photography, theatre, and cabaret were other areas explored by increasing numbers of Jews.³⁷

While part of the Jewish community succeeded in climbing the social ladder, some in traditional and some in new sectors, the public authorities and Jewish leaders wanted faster progress. So they made active attempts to broaden the community's economic base by introducing craft occupations, from which Jews had been barred in the ancien régime, but which could now help to reshape their economy. Craftsmanship, the production of handmade physical objects, was felt to be more useful and admirable than earning money by trading or retailing. From this point of view, small-scale merchants were not productive members of society, but pesky middlemen between craftspeople and users, earning their money with mere words (PLATE 47). The hope was that craft occupations could play a role in the re-education of poor Jews. The first attempts to train Jewish children as craftspeople were made in The Hague and Amsterdam in the late eighteenth century, but most of them failed because of the economic malaise. No new effort was made until around 1850, when the Association for the Promotion of Craft Occupations among the Israelites (Vereeniging tot Bevordering van Ambachten onder de Israëlieten) was founded in The Hague, along with similar organizations in Amsterdam, Middelburg, Zwolle, Rotterdam, and Leeuwarden. The Maatschappij tot Nut der Israëlieten was involved in these activities too. Jewish children were assigned to Christian craftspeople, supplied with tools and materials, and instructed not only in their new trade but also in morality and religion. The most successful association, the one in The Hague, sponsored the training of thirty Jewish craftspeople a year, from watchmakers to carpenters and from shoemakers/tailors to bookbinders.³⁸

The group of Jewish craftspeople remained marginal in size, but the perceived success of the programme was celebrated in both Jewish and non-Jewish media. They were seen as living proof of the transformation of Jews from unproductive foreigners into productive citizens. Meanwhile, the Jewish artisans had to set up their own safety nets to cover the risk of illness or death. For this purpose, they founded associations of Jewish craftspeople, which also furnished opportunities for them to socialize and express pride in their work.³⁹

Despite all the initiatives to move Jews into new occupations, poverty remained a serious problem. Multatuli wrote about the poor Jewish districts in his Amsterdam novel *Woutertje Pieterse*, and there were similar areas in Rotterdam, The Hague, Gronin-

³⁷ On Jews in music, dance, and cabaret, see also J. Cohen, *De onontkoombare afkomst van Eli d'Olveira: Een Portugees-joodse familiegeschiedenis* (Amsterdam, 2015), 116–51.

³⁸ Vereeniging ter bevordering van Ambachten onder de Israëlieten te 's-Gravenhage.

³⁹ B. Wallet, 'Op zoek naar de joodse ambachtsman', *Benjamin*, 27, no. 104 (2016), 28–9.

gen, Zwolle, and Leeuwarden: 'The hovels where they are described as "living"—blows to the face of civilization.'40 Poor relief was therefore one of the main tasks of the local Jewish congregation. Unlike in the ancien régime, this activity received financial support from the government, but not nearly enough. To limit the power of the parnasim, an independent Dutch Israelite Poor Relief Committee (Nederlands Israëlietisch Armbestuur) was set up in 1825 to play a role in providing for the poor and caring for the ill, the elderly, and orphans in the major cities. 41 Jewish beggars were sent to institutions for beggars or, from 1818 onwards, to 'welfare colonies' in Frederiksoord and Willemsoord and to the penal colony in Veenhuizen. The intention was for them to learn farming or some other useful occupation there so that they could return to society. In these colonies, a Jewish congregation formed, with its own synagogue and teacher of religion.⁴² Special Jewish hospitals, such as the Nederlandsch Israëlitisch Ziekenhuis in Amsterdam and Megon Hatsedek in Rotterdam, were established for the Jewish poor. There were also Jewish physicians dedicated to helping the poor in the Jewish districts. One such doctor, Samuël Sarphati of the Portuguese Jewish congregation in Amsterdam, became an indefatigable fighter against poverty and a pioneer of social reform. He worked to help not only impoverished Jews, but also the city as a whole. For example, he was the driving force behind a flour and bread factory in 1857, a national mortgage bank in 1861, and all sorts of other initiatives. 43

Measures to promote education, social mobility, and craftsmanship generally focused on boys and young men. Girls and women were educated at the schools for the poor and schools of religion but otherwise went virtually unnoticed. Of course, many of them worked side by side with their husbands in retail and devoted much of the rest of their time to housework. Only in a few exceptional cases did women break through to the Jewish public domain. The poet Estella Hertzveld (1837–81), the granddaughter of the chief rabbi in Zwolle, made a name for herself and also translated novels. After marrying in 1863, she withdrew from public life, in keeping with the mores of the time. 44

Surveying the social and economic development of Dutch Jewry from 1815 to 1870, one must observe that it lagged far behind their political and legal integration. This was partly because of the prevailing poverty at the start of the period; the community only gradually received, and made use of, new economic opportunities. It undoubtedly also

⁴⁰ Multatuli, *Ideën VII* (Amsterdam, 1879), 75.

⁴¹ S. J. Philips et al., Gedenkboek ter gelegenheid van het honderdjarig bestaan van het Nederlandsch Israëlietisch Armbestuur te Amsterdam: 1825–1925 (Amsterdam, 1926).

⁴² R. Berends et al., *Arbeid ter disciplinering en bestraffing: Veenhuizen als onvrije kolonie van de Maatschappij van Weldadigheid 1823–1859* (Zutphen, 1984); Iet Erdtsieck, "The Jewish Officials of Willemsoord and Veenhuizen, 1818–1890', *StR* 35 (2001), 23–47; W. Schackmann, *De proefkolonie: Vlijt, vaderlijke tucht en het weldadige karakter onzer natie* (Amsterdam, 2006).

⁴³ L. Hagoort, Samuël Sarphati: Van Portugese armenarts tot Amsterdamse ondernemer (Amsterdam, 2013).

⁴⁴ T. Keyzer Tzn., Estella Hijmans-Hertzveld (als dichteres): Een studie (Zaandam, 1868).

had to do with the relatively slow pace of Dutch economic growth, which would change drastically after 1870. But after around 1850 new opportunities proliferated rapidly, thanks to the success of education policy and the constitutional changes of 1848; Jews found their way into manufacturing, political life, science, academia, the media, and craft occupations. At the same time, Jews in every social and economic group could not help but notice that, within the group, they still encountered forms of exclusion and discrimination.

Religion and Culture

The 'nationalization' and integration of the Jewish community in the Netherlands placed new emphasis on Judaism as a *religion* and a *culture*. In Dutch Judaism, national and ethnic elements were not entirely denied, but neither were they strongly accentuated. In the new context, being Jewish was mainly the expression of a religious identity, which was defined as *Israëlietisch*, literally 'Israelite'. That was a deliberate choice: the word 'Jew' was felt to be pejorative, and in conceptual terms it was seen as the expression of a Jewish nationality. 'Israelite', in contrast, was a word that the average European citizen recognized from the Bible, and its use linked contemporary Jews to the biblical tradition. This marked them as the inheritors of an influential culture that had contributed to European civilization. This was how the word 'Israelite' began its rise; it would not go into decline until the final years of the nineteenth century.

Yet what did it mean to be an 'Israelite', aside from the obvious connection to the Hebrew Bible and the Hebrew language? This was not a simple question. European Jews were deeply divided about how the religion should respond to the questions of modernity: citizenship, individuality, historicism, and science. The divisions in Jewish communities ran especially deep in the German states, which were torn between Reform and Orthodox interpretations of Judaism. While Reform, or Liberal, Judaism saw modernity as a great good and sought to reconcile Jewish life with it, the emerging Orthodox movement took an antithetical attitude, or at least aimed to hold back the tide. Eastern European Jewry, in turn, had become divided from the eighteenth century onwards between different varieties of Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox Judaism, varying from Polish hasidim (followers of a pietistic movement) to Lithuanian mitnagedim (followers of a movement that placed great emphasis on study and scholarship).

Rabbis and administrators had this international context in mind when charting a course for the Dutch Jewish community. The foundations were laid by drawing new lines between the powers of rabbis and administrators, establishing a principle referred to as the separation of the religious from the administrative. In the old 'Jewish Nation', the rabbis had wielded great authority over individual community members. They had to give that up; from this time forward, the rabbi's jurisdiction was limited to the synagogue. There, he saw to it that halakhah (Jewish religious law) was strictly observed,

but in a manner suited to civilized Dutch citizens. What Jews did outside the synagogue was their personal responsibility. The rabbi could no longer punish infractors with fines or excommunication. Nor could he become involved in administrative matters, since those were the exclusive preserve of the caste of Jewish regents. Conversely, the administrators could not play any role in religious matters; in that domain, the rabbi was the authority and they had to respect that.

The result was that the 'Israelite denomination' became a formally Orthodox denomination, with Orthodox rabbis and strict enforcement of halakhah in the synagogue. At the same time, Dutch Jews were free to choose their own degree of religiosity, from very pious to extremely liberal. The broad range of religious views within Jewish congregations became increasingly visible in the period leading up to 1870. Yet all those Jews met on equal terms in the synagogue, and the rabbi (or chief rabbi) was not permitted to make distinctions between them. The basis of this 'unified congregation', in which all Jews remained together despite their different ideas and practices, was set out in one of the Israelite denomination's earliest sets of regulations. Part of the motivation was social legitimacy: the public authorities were unwilling to recognize more than one Jewish denomination.

To protect this fragile unity and keep the Jewish community from falling apart, local and national administrators developed a policy that might be described as 'Dutch moderation'. The Dutch Jews wanted to share in the national characteristics that the Dutch claimed for themselves. One was moderation (*middelmaat*), a dislike of extremes and a preference for the measured middle course. That approach came to characterize Dutch Jewish religious life: both German Reform Judaism and eastern European hasidism were seen as a threat to the unity of the community. The feeling was that such external influences had to be warded off as much as possible. The best way to do that was by focusing on the Dutch Jewish community and on building up a national religious establishment.⁴⁵

In practice, the principle of Dutch moderation implied that any changes in the religious domain had to be made very cautiously and on a small scale, and they required the consent of one or more chief rabbis. As a result, special effort was put into 'decorum' in synagogue services. Middle-class culture, which was then on the rise, became the measure of appropriate, civilized conduct in the synagogue. Ways of dressing, praying, and reading aloud had to be adapted to it. Order, structure, and tranquillity became paramount. Like the organization of the Jewish denomination, Jewish religious life was also 'Protestantized'. This was visible in the rules on official clothing for rabbis, who had to wear a toga, tricorn hat, and white jabot, like Reformed pastors. The <code>hazan</code> (cantor and leader of the synagogue service) had to wear a silk coat, black trousers, and black

⁴⁵ Cf. E. H. Kossmann, 'Hollandse middelmaat: *De Gids* 1837–1987', in id., *Vergankelijkheid en continuïteit: Opstellen over geschiedenis* (Amsterdam, 1995), 47–59. In Wallet, *Nieuwe Nederlanders*, this characterization is used for the first time to describe the policy of Jewish dignitaries.

stockings. On the sabbath he too was allowed to wear a white jabot. This change was also visible in the introduction of a new type of *derashah*, referred to as a *leerrede* (literally 'instructional talk'), a Dutch word for sermon. Sermons had an irregular place in the synagogue liturgy, especially in the Ashkenazi tradition, but they came to be seen as the ideal means of moral education. Regular preaching, in accordance with the standards of eloquence—on the model of Professor J. H. van der Palm of the University of Leiden—became mandatory.⁴⁶

The new *leerrede* was not only compulsory but also imposed a change in content and linguistic style. The *derashot* that had been given until then had often been strongly halakhic, focused on Jewish law, and the language of delivery had been Hebrew, Yiddish, or Portuguese. But to reach the synagogue-goers, a different language was called for: namely, Dutch. Likewise, the content had to be no longer legalistic but educational and ethical. This led to a problem, however: the synagogue was the bailiwick of the chief rabbi. His consent and participation were necessary. The public authorities, the Chief Commission, and the local administrators could not simply prescribe the language and content of the *leerrede* and enforce the new requirements. They therefore encouraged the shift by organizing preaching competitions, in which the winner was richly rewarded. These competitions were very popular and sparked a growing interest in the Dutch-language *derashah*.⁴⁷

The pioneer of the Dutch-language sermon was the Portuguese Jewish teacher and preacher Aron Cohen Carillon. He and his fellow preachers were required to speak Portuguese in the Amsterdam Esnoga. Matters had reached the point where almost everyone left the synagogue as soon as the sermon began and did not return until Carillon, or whoever was preaching, had finished. In 1832 he had the opportunity to deliver a sermon in Dutch to the Ashkenazi congregation in Middelburg (PLATE 17), one that he had given earlier in Portuguese. He chose the fiery Dutch nationalist 'Sermon on the Present Circumstances in Our Fatherland', full of accusations against the rebellious Belgians.

It was no coincidence that the first Dutch-language Jewish *derashah* was delivered outside Amsterdam. Outside the major cities, in the countryside and in the east of the Netherlands, there was much experimentation with new forms. While they had to remain within the bounds of halakhah, they also aimed to make space for new, modern ideas. The dominant role of the chief rabbis in religious matters led to considerable diversity among regions. The chief rabbi in Zwolle, Hartog Josua Hertzveld (1781–1846), was a leader in the process of renewal, who greatly encouraged the Dutch-language *leerrede* in his region. In Amsterdam, the transition was slow and difficult;

 $^{^{46}\,}$ For the larger context, see M. Saperstein, Jewish Preaching 1200–1800 (New Haven, 1989).

⁴⁷ For the corresponding tendency in Germany, see S. Lassig, 'Die deutschsprachige Predigt: Bürgerlichkeit als Norm und religiöse Praxis?', in id., *Jüdische Wege ins Bürgertum, Kulturelles Kapital und sozialer Aufstieg im 19. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen, 2004), 290–325.

older community members were very attached to their Yiddish sermon, or *droosje*. But it was the chief rabbi in Leeuwarden, Bendit Dusnus, who resisted the new trend longest. Only after his death in 1886 was the Yiddish *droosje* replaced by the Dutch *leerrede*.⁴⁸

The decision to give the chief rabbis full control of their respective regions was not made with great enthusiasm. In 1841 Chief Rabbi Hertzveld had proposed the formation of a 'synod' of Dutch chief rabbis to hammer out a large number of religious changes and put them into action. He drew up a list of items, most of which related to 'decorum' in the synagogue and the integration of a national Dutch perspective into Jewish practice. Hertzveld advocated Dutch-language sermons, the introduction of confirmation for boys and girls, choral singing, silence during prayer in the synagogue, and the elimination of the sale of *mitsvot* (synagogal honours).⁴⁹ This caused an unprecedented commotion, however, with other chief rabbis refusing in advance to participate and the most Orthodox community members expressing their fear of change.

Hertzveld had chosen just the wrong moment to present his plan. Around the same time, conferences of Reform rabbis were being organized in Germany (Wiesbaden, 1837; Braunschweig, 1844; Frankfurt, 1845; and Breslau, 1846). There too, programmes for change were being discussed. Regardless of the content of his proposals, Hertzveld appeared to be part of this tendency. A group of Amsterdam Jews led by Orthodox bankers—the Lehren brothers and their friend Abraham Prins—took a leading role internationally. In 1844–5, they gathered 'responsa' (formal halakhic verdicts) from many authoritative Orthodox rabbis, stating their rejection of one Reform proposal after another. This collection, Torat hakena'ot, included contributions from a number of Dutch chief rabbis. The initiative was an important step in the mobilization of the international Orthodox establishment against the Reform movement.⁵⁰ In this context, Hertzveld's synod did not have the ghost of a chance. The Chief Commission then decided that each chief rabbi would have the authority to decide, within the parameters of Dutch moderation, what changes and improvements could be made in his own region. This was the origin of the large regional diversity and different rates of change.

Much as Orthodox forces came into action, an attempt was made in the middle of the century to launch a Dutch Reform movement. One group of upper-middle-class Jews had established an association in Amsterdam, Sjochre Dea, with the goal of reforming Dutch Jewry. In 1860, there were plans to use that association as the basis for a new, independent Reform Jewish congregation, which would exist alongside the NIHS. The rabbi was to be the German Jewish Dr Isaac Löw Chronik, who had already

⁴⁸ B. Wallet, 'Religious Oratory and the Improvement of Congregants: Dutch-Jewish Preaching in the first Half of the Nineteenth Century', *StR* 34 (2000), 168–93.

⁴⁹ H. J. Hertzveld, Herderlijk schrijven (Zwolle, 1842).

⁵⁰ E. Kooij-Bas, 'Nothing but Heretics: Torat ha-Qena'ot. A Study and Translation of Nineteenth-Century Responsa against Religious Reform' (doctoral thesis, Universiteit Tilburg 2009).

been acting in that role since 1856. The idea that the members of the association would split off from their congregation caused bad blood, and when Chronik held his *derashah* on the sabbath, he found himself surrounded by pious Jews who shouted: 'Stone him!' This incident compelled Chronik to emigrate to Chicago and nipped Sjochre Dea's initiative in the bud. But as a concession to the wishes of the Reform movement, a choir was formed for services in the Grote Sjoel (Great Synagogue). This led Isaac Heymann (the 'Gnesener Chazzen'; 1827–1906), the community's most prominent cantor, to compose a number of new melodies.⁵¹

The principle of Dutch moderation kept Orthodox and Reform Jews together despite their different wishes; changes were made only gradually, one small step at a time. While these changes went too far for some and not far enough for others, the gradual pace generally prevented rifts and schisms—although not in some smaller congregations, especially near the German border. There, some of the friction felt in Germany rubbed off, often through the influence of family members. When choral singing was introduced in the Jewish congregation in the Pekelas, two villages in Groningen, the right wing split off for fear that the Reform hymnal Braunschweiger Gesänge would be used and that the next step would be organ music.⁵² In practice, most of these schismatic congregations were short-lived and soon won over by gradualism. The only successful schism by Reform Jews was in Curaçao, where to the sorrow of Hakham (Chief Rabbi) Mendes Chumaceiro, a Reform congregation was established in 1864 that did away with the separation of men and women in the synagogue, introduced an organ, and no longer required men to cover their heads. In 1867 they consecrated their own synagogue in the Scharloo district: Temple Emanu-El. Although there were shocked reactions, especially in the Portuguese Jewish mother congregations in the Netherlands, there were no further consequences in the 'mother country'.

Chief rabbis were expected to provide community leadership in the turbulent international situation and to keep the 'unified congregation' together. They also had to respond to constant questions about the implications of civil rights. Some chief rabbis had a hard time living up to these expectations. Traditionally, rabbis had mainly been halakhists, 'judges' with a formidable knowledge of the Jewish tradition. All of a sudden, they were being asked to meet very different requirements; the rabbi was now expected to be a spiritual leader and pulpit orator, a public standard-bearer of his community. Some chief rabbis, such as Jakob Mozes Löwenstamm in Amsterdam, Joseph Asser Lehmans in The Hague, and Bendit Dusnus in Leeuwarden, were unwilling or unable to meet these new criteria. They continued to play the traditional rabbinical role, despite the growing distance this created between them and the integrating members of their congregation.

⁵¹ Der Israelitische Volkslehrer, 1870, no. 7; D. Michman, Het liberale jodendom in Nederland 1929–1943 (Amsterdam, 1988).

⁵² S. van der Poel, Joodse stadjers: De joodse gemeenschap in Groningen 1796–1945 (Assen, 2004), 57–8.

Until that time, chief rabbis had been either born into rabbinical dynasties (like the Löwenstamms) or imported from abroad. A number of chief rabbis tutored promising young men, who were then sent abroad to complete their rabbinical education. To stop the influx of foreign rabbis and Dutch Jewish rabbis trained abroad, the Nederlands-Israëlietisch Seminarium (NIS; 'Dutch Israelite Seminary') was founded in 1836. Its mission was to provide the Dutch Jews with spiritual leaders: rabbis and religious teachers. In 1849 there was an initiative to go even further, by developing a Dutch Jewish theological programme of study at the University of Leiden, inspired by the ideas of the German Reform rabbi Abraham Geiger, that would correspond to the educational programme for Dutch Reformed pastors. This never materialized, but the transformation of the NIS programme into a university-level credential remained a serious topic of discussion. Any candidate for the highest rabbinical rank, *moreh*, had to hold at least a *kandidaat* degree (the lowest university degree) in the field of humanities. This formed yet another challenge for the modern rabbi; on top of everything else, he had to have a university education.

This transition was not easy for the rabbinical caste. At first, there were not enough suitable Dutch rabbis, and despite all the objections, the only option was to hire Germans. These new rabbis often held doctorates, had mastered the art of public speaking, and had a degree of social respectability. Examples included Dr Joseph Isaacssohn in Rotterdam (1850–70), Jacob Fränkel in Zwolle (1852–82), Dr Jacob Rosenberg in Groningen (1852–61), and Louis Landsberg in Maastricht (1860–1904). There was a risk that such rabbis might have immoderate Reform or Orthodox views, and that was not the only problem; in addition, their command of Dutch was usually less than satisfactory. In 1852 Fränkel's appointment caused an uproar because other rabbis suspected him of supporting the Reform movement. After he was appointed over these objections, the accusation proved to be groundless. The concerns about Rosenberg, the rabbi in Groningen, were better founded. He refused to learn Dutch, saying it was no more than a dialect of pure High German.⁵³

When the relationship with a German chief rabbi was strained or slow to develop, it made other regions reluctant to appoint anyone at all. After the death of Samuël Berenstein in 1838 (PLATE 40), the office of chief rabbi in Amsterdam was not passed on to his son Berisch Berenstein, who was rejected by part of the progressive wing. Berenstein Jr., disappointed, left for The Hague, where in 1848 was appointed the chief Ashkenazi rabbi. The search for a new chief rabbi for Amsterdam—which again took place largely outside the Netherlands, for lack of an alternative—did not bear fruit until 1874. The situation in the Portuguese sister congregation was not much better; from 1822 to 1900, the hakham's seat remained unoccupied. In the absence of a chief rabbi, a

⁵³ C. Brasz, 'Dutch Jewry and its Undesired German Rabbinate', Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook, 57 (2012), 73–86: 73–8; I. Erdtsieck, De emancipatie van de joden in Overijssel 1796–1940: De rol van de Overijsselse opperrabbijnen Hertzveld, Frankel en Hirsch (Assen, 1995).

team of 'rabbinical assessors' (*dayanim*) took over his duties, alternating with the position of acting rabbi, for the Ashkenazim, or, for the Sephardim, acting *ḥakham*.

The fact that some rabbis came from abroad and others had not yet learned, or were unwilling, to speak Dutch created a kind of vacuum that was filled by a select group of intellectual religious instructors. 54 They devoted themselves heart and soul to building up a modest but indispensable library of books about Dutch Jewish practices. These religious educators generally knew each other from a variety of Jewish intellectual associations, such as the literary society Tongelet (established in 1815 by Mozes Loonstein, Mozes Lemans, Samuël Israël Mulder, and David Abraham Lissaur); the society for advanced Jewish religious studies Reishis Chochma (founded in 1813 by Simon Ephraim Heigmans and Sjlomo Dubno, which studied works such as Mendelssohn's Bi'ur); the mathematical association Mathesis Artium Genitrix (1807), which was 'general' (i.e. interreligious) in theory but mainly Jewish in practice; and the general literary society Tot Nut en Beschaving (also 1807). Those last two organizations merged in 1819. It was in these associations that the religious educators formed their opinions, often in dialogue with broader European Jewish developments. 55 They remained strongly influenced by Moses Mendelssohn, even after the emergence of Wissenschaft des Judentums in Germany. Although they were linked to the Wissenschaftler in many ways and closely followed their publications, Dutch Jewish intellectuals kept their distance from the movement. Unlike their German counterparts, they had an exceptionally high level of religious engagement, and their perspective on Judaism emphasized not its historical nature but its contemporary relevance. As Irene E. Zwiep has shown, the Dutch religious instructors preferred to disregard the radical elements in the thinking of Leopold Zunz and his circle, instead concentrating on the timeless truth of Jewish ethics. Against this background, Mozes Lemans, Samuel Israël Mulder, Gabriël Izak Polak, Hartog Somerhausen, and others dedicated themselves to the intellectual and religious education of the Dutch Jews, an ideal encapsulated in the phrase godsdienstige beschaving ('religious civilization' or 'religious culture').56 It was they who translated the prayer-books and the Hebrew Bible. The bilingual Hebrew-Dutch editions, published by the long-established firms of Proops and Van Embden, became standard teaching materials in Jewish schools and were increasingly used in synagogues as well. The intention was to give Dutch Jews a better command of both Hebrew and Dutch and to improve their understanding of the core ideas of Judaism.

⁵⁴ For their background and a profile, see B. Wallet, "Een veelzijdig ontwikkeld en maatschappelijk beschaafd mensch": De Israëlitische godsdienstonderwijzer in de lange negentiende eeuw', in J. Exalto and G. van Klinken (eds.), De protestantse onderwijzer: Geschiedenis van een dienstbaar beroep (1800–1920) (= Jaarboek voor de Geschiedenis van het Nederlands Protestantisme na 1800, 23) (2015), 147–64.

⁵⁵ P. Buijs, 'Tot nut en eer van 't jodendom: Joodse genootschappen in Nederland 1738–1846', in H. Berg (ed.), *De Gelykstaat der Joden: Inburgering van een minderheid* (Zwolle, 1996), 15–24.

⁵⁶ I. E. Zwiep, 'The Haskamah of History or Why Did the Dutch Wissenschaft des Judentums Spurn Zunz's Writings?', European Journal of Jewish Studies, 7/2 (2013), 131–50.

Some chief rabbis, such as Samuël Berenstein in Amsterdam, were closely involved with these projects, but they allowed the Jewish intellectuals to take the initiative. In the process, they became an increasingly prominent group.

A pioneering role was played by the Hebraist and mathematician Mozes Lemans, head of the Jewish school for the poor in Amsterdam from 1818 to 1832, who published his translation of the Ashkenazi *siddur* (prayer-book) in 1822. This edition was inconvenient for practical use, because it was in Dutch only. In 1838 Samuel Israël Mulder and Gabriël Izak Polak (1803–69) jointly produced a new bilingual edition. Then their ways parted. Mulder published *Gebeden der Nederlandsche Israëliten voor het geheele jaar* ('Prayers of the Dutch Israelites for All the Year Round') with his regular publisher Van Embden. In 1852 Polak produced an especially influential prayer-book edition, which was as comprehensive as possible: *Areshet sefatayim*. From the late nineteenth century onwards, this was known as the 'seven-penny *tefilah*' (*zevenstuiverstefille*; *tefilah*, Hebrew for 'prayer', means 'prayer-book' here).⁵⁷

These religious books designed for everyday use were part of a larger publication project arising from the circles of the Jewish intelligentsia. Besides the countless textbooks for Jewish schools, at least three categories of publications can be identified. First of all, major classics from the Jewish tradition were translated into Dutch. These included Maimonides's Shemonah perakim (trans. Moses Mijer Cohen, 1845), Jedaja Bedersi ha-Penini's Behinat olam (trans. Leman Borstel, 1855), Sefer haḥayim by Simon Frankfurt (in an 1851 edition by Samuël Israël Mulder and a new 1867 version by Gabriël Izak Polak and Mozes Levie van Ameringen), the medieval Jewish chronicle Sefer yosipon (in an edition by Mozes Levie van Ameringen and Gabriël Polak, 1868) and the continuation by Menachem Amelander, She'eris yisroel (trans. Gabriël Polak and Levi Goudsmit Azn., 1855). These books were selected with the Wissenschaft des Judentums movement in mind and, in accordance with the standards of the day, were accompanied by paratext: introductions, annotations, and indexes. But every one of these publications was intended to nurture the 'religious culture' (godsdienstige beschaving) of the Dutch Jews and to root the community in the ancient Jewish tradition in a manner suited to the modern age.

Second, a cultural transfer took place from the world of German-language central European Wissenschaft des Judentums to the emancipated Dutch Jews. A number of German Jewish texts were translated or adapted for Dutch Jewish readers. This transfer was not indiscriminate: the more philosophical and ideological texts were passed over, while educational and historical publications were very popular. Among the authors whose books were translated and adapted were Chaim Leeser, Salomon Herxheimer, Herz Homberg, Leopold Zunz, and Peter Beer. Isaak Markus Jost's series of books

 $^{^{57}}$ B. Wallet, 'Vroomheid en beschaving: Het Joodse boek in negentiende-eeuws Amsterdam', Alef Beet, 25/2 (2015), 14–23.

in the German Enlightenment tradition, *Allgemeine Geschichte des israelitischen Volkes* ('General History of the Israelite People', 1832), was translated and adapted by the religious instructor Mozes Mijers and the journalist Isaak Jacob Lion. History was said to give Jews access to an awe-inspiring past, to the wellsprings of their own culture, which was in no way inferior to that of their Christian compatriots. Jewish authors felt the need for 'their own' historical writing partly because the first *Geschiedenis der Joden in Nederland* ('History of the Jews in the Netherlands', 1843) had been published not by a Dutch Jew, but by Hendrik Jacob Koenen, a member of the Christian Réveil movement. Although it was a fairly accurate factual account, the Christian perspective was undeniable.

Third, Dutch intellectuals published their own writing. It may be here, more than in all their translations of religious, classic, and contemporary German works, that we find the heart of their programme. The emphasis was on Dutch and Hebrew, the languages of the Dutch nation and the Jewish religion. They strove to write the purest (in other words, most 'biblical') Hebrew possible. The Tongelet association—whose name echoes the phrase 'Tot nut' ('For the benefit') in the names of well-known Dutch philanthropic societies of the period—published two collections of the results of these literary labours: Bikurei tongelet ('First Fruits of Tongelet', 1822) and Peri tongelet ('Fruits of Tongelet', 1825). A number of intellectuals focused on Hebrew poetry, much of which was occasional in nature. Besides the translations of the Dutch 'national poets' Hendrik Tollens and Rhijnvis Feith, these were mainly poems with Jewish pedagogical, religious, or historical themes. Samuël Israël Mulder wrote the poem Berurya (1825), about an independent Jewish woman from the second century CE. In 1847 Simon Ephraim Heigmans published a collection of Hebrew songs, Ben he he, with a Dutch translation. It includes an echo-verse poem on the thirteen hermeneutic rules for interpreting the Torah. Gabriël Polak presented a collection of prose and poetry, Haporet, with an iambic translation of the Latin student song 'Io Vivat'. Abraham Daniël Delaville (1807-77), the Hebrew teacher at the NIS, received special acclaim from his contemporaries. Along with many occasional works, he also daringly published reflections on contemporary events in the style of Isaac da Costa. For instance, the central theme of Tehilat tefus was the effects of book printing. His religious work includes Seder hasedarim, poems accompanying the weekly Torah portions. Delaville's students Mozes Daniël Woudhuijsen and Isaac Jacob Coppenhagen kept the modest Amsterdam tradition of Hebrew poetry alive until the end of the century.

The great effort devoted to the 'religious cultural development' of the Dutch Jews had not only an intrinsic but also an extrinsic motivation. In the course of the century, a progressive philosophy of history became fashionable, according to which Judaism was regarded as an anachronism, a relic of an earlier historical period. In this narrative, Jews had stood still while the Christian world soared. This perspective underlay anti-Jewish

⁵⁸ Zwiep, 'The Haskamah of History', 136–48.

remarks—for instance, in a lecture given by the Remonstrant pastor Bruno Tideman in Hoorn in 1869, and in some responses to that lecture.

Tideman sketched the mythical figure of Ahasuerus, the Wandering Jew, as the prototype 'of the dark side of the Israelite spirit': anthropomorphic, earthly, unsuited to spiritual things, not modern and critical but lost in repulsive rabbinical hair-splitting. Another pastor, Dr C. M. Vos van Heenvliet, seconded these sentiments after the talk had been printed as a pamphlet: Jews, he said, were crafty, intrusive sensualists who controlled not only the press, but also all nightclubs. In short, 'Judaism' symbolized degeneration and anachronism. Against this backdrop, it is easy to understand the strong emphasis that the intellectual religious instructors placed on Judaism as a religious and cultural tradition (*godsdienstige beschaving*) in its own right, and as a pillar of European culture. It was only through culture, Hebrew, and moral elevation that this defamatory language could be stopped.

The chief rabbis only gradually reclaimed the initiative, and only after a major reorganization of the NIS by its newly appointed rector, Dr Joseph Hirsch Dünner (1833–1911; PLATE 49). Originally from Poland, he had earned his doctorate in Germany with a thesis on Ibn Ezra. It was Dünner's combination of Orthodox views and academic rigour that had led to his selection as NIS rector in 1865. In his Denkschreiben in 1862, he had set out his aspiration: to achieve a synthesis between Jewish learning and general knowledge. He rejected the compartmentalization that was all too typical of Orthodox circles. Although he sought to fence off the Hebrew Bible from historical criticism, he insisted that the method was applicable to the rabbinical tradition, including the Talmud. This laid the foundation for a new approach to Talmud study: thorough and critical, no longer dominated by pilpul (casuistical hair-splitting) and anecdotal discussion. Dünner was a great advocate of the new-style sermons and also supported the programme of moral education already in progress. He saw it as his responsibility to train a new generation of religious educators and chief rabbis at the NIS, who would serve as modern, moderate Orthodox leaders for the Dutch Jewish community. At first, Dünner's radical commitment to modern methods of scholarship met with serious opposition from the chief rabbis, with their traditional views. But he persisted, and his influence grew substantially in 1874, when he was appointed as chief rabbi of the Amsterdam and North Holland region.⁵⁹

Dünner was a close friend of the Jewish religious instructor and intellectual Meyer Marcus Roest, who operated in a new Jewish public domain: the Jewish press. From 1835 to 1839, 'Israelite yearbooks' were published, full of not only practical but also political, moral, and scholarly information. In 1849 the first Jewish weekly rolled off the presses: the Nederlandsch Israëlietisch Nieuws- en Advertentieblad, renamed the Israëlietisch Weekblad in 1850 and the Weekblad voor Israëlieten in 1860. In 1865 a more Orthodox com-

⁵⁹ A good biography of Dünner is still lacking. A first sketch can be found in J. Meijer, *Rector en raw: De levensgeschiedenis van Dr. J. H. Dünner* (1833–1911), vol. i: (1833–1874) (Heemstede, 1984).

petitor appeared on the scene: the *Nieuw Israëlietisch Weekblad (NIW)*. An earlier Orthodox initiative, *De Israëliet*, had folded the year it was launched, 1853. That could not be said of the NIW, which grew into the largest Jewish periodical in the Netherlands. These periodicals, focused on Amsterdam but distributed nationally, made Dutch Jews better informed about national and international affairs and greatly contributed to the emergence of an independent Dutch Jewish identity. At the same time, they were forums for shaping public opinion, and fierce debates were fought in their pages about the state of Judaism and its future. From 1867 to 1869, Roest edited the articles on Jewish literature in the *NIW*, which were intended to share the results of Jewish scholarship with the wider public. Dünner, too, made avid use of this new medium.⁶⁰

Transnational Connections

Everything in the Kingdom of the Netherlands seemed aimed at weaving the Jews into the fabric of the national community; the implication was that this would simultaneously release them from broader Jewish ties and loyalties. But were these two types of affiliation really so incompatible? At the start of the century, that was far from clear, and it became the topic of a difficult, long-running debate; while it was taken for granted that the new Dutch Jews had a bond with the Netherlands and the Dutch, what was the nature of their bond with Jews in other countries?

One of the earliest responses to this issue may be the founding (mentioned briefly in the previous chapter) of the Pekidim Ve'amarkalim Arei Hakodesh (Officials and Supervisors of the Holy Cities) in 1809. The main objective of this organization was to raise funds for the devout Jewish communities in the Holy Land, especially in the cities of Jerusalem, Hebron, Safed, and Tiberias. The usual practice thus far had been to give this money to sheliḥim, emissaries of these communities, who invariably passed through Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and The Hague on their fundraising tours of Europe. After working with these emissaries for a while, the pekidim felt that the method was too indirect and lacked transparency. They also wanted more influence over how the money was distributed, because they had the impression that the Sephardi sheliḥim were not giving Ashkenazi communities in the Holy Land their fair share. This organization, established by Izak Goedeinde (Breitbaart), Abraham Prins, and Hirschel Lehren, became a huge success; local representatives in not only the Netherlands but large parts of Ashkenaz collected money and sent it to Amsterdam. In Germany, Switzerland, Great Britain, and even the United States, the pekidim built up a tight-knit network. The Amsterdam office then decided which synagogues, yeshivot, hospitals, and social services in the Holy Land would be supported. Their modern system of

⁶⁰ L. Fuks (ed.), Joodse pers in de Nederlanden en Duitsland/Jüdische Presse in den Niederlanden und in Deutschland 1674–1940 (Amsterdam, 1969).

fundraising and rapid communication made the *pekidim* very influential, and as a consequence, major decisions for the Palestinian Jewish communities were made in Amsterdam. On until the rise of the Zionist movement, which was fiercely critical of the fact the money went mainly to the activities of devout religious Jews, was there a serious competitor with a contrasting agenda. In 1843, however, there was a conflict in which progressive Jews accused the Lehrens of lording it over the Yishuv (Jewish community in Palestine) in a dictatorial fashion. But the critics were silenced when the Lehrens produced eighty-six testimonials from the Holy Land.

The pekidim were not only asserting their ties to the Holy Land—just as Terra Santa did in the Portuguese Jewish community—but were also one manifestation of ongoing identification with the transnational Ashkenazi community. It was not the borders of the Dutch nation, but the imagined community of Ashkenaz that formed the home territory of the pekidim. But this pre-existing transnational identity was reinforced by modern means. This fitted neatly into the broader agenda of the administrators of the aid organization, the Lehren, Hollander, Rubens, and Prins families (which were in many ways interrelated) and their like-minded associates. In an age of 'nationalization' and integration, they remained focused on the familiar and trusted transnational community of Ashkenaz. This reflected their ideological agenda—in particular, their staunch opposition to various aspects of emancipation and integration policy. They tried to block the changes to the Jewish educational system, objected to even the moderate changes in the synagogal liturgy, and criticized the fact that Jewish governing bodies, especially the Chief Commission, were dominated by progressives.

The Lehrens' frustration led them to organize their own home synagogue services, using not the 'nationalized' Dutch Jewish liturgy but the eastern European, hasidic, and kabbalistic Nusach Sfard. The Lehrens required the students at the NIS—where they wielded a strong influence—to attend this private *minyan*, which was a potent expression of a transnational Ashkenazi identity. But the opponents of Hirschel Lehren (1784–1853) did not make it easy for him: the progressive administrators and Amsterdam's Chief Rabbi Berenstein saw the home services as undermining their policies and authority and went to court to put a stop to them. The legal battle dragged on for years, during which Lehren temporarily moved to The Hague, where Chief Rabbi Joseph Asser supported his cause. By that time, Lehren's home had become an established hub of international Orthodoxy; guests from western and eastern Europe and the Middle

⁶¹ A. Morgenstern, *The Pekidim and Amarcalim of Amsterdam and the Jewish Community in Palestine*, 1810–1840 [Hapekidim veha'amarkalim be'amsterdam vehayishuv hayehudi be'erets yisra'el bamahhatsit harishonah shel hame'ah hatesha-esreh] (Jerusalem, 1981); J. J. Rivlin and B. Rivlin, *Letters of the Pekidim and Amarcalim of Amsterdam*, 5585–5587 [Igerot hapekidim veha'amarkalim me'amsterdam, 5585–5587] (Jerusalem, 1965); id., *Letters of the Pekidim and Amarcalim of Amsterdam*, 5588 [Igerot hapekidim veha'amarkalim me'amsterdam, 5588] (Jerusalem, 1970); B. Rivlin and I. Bartal, *Letters of the Pekidim and Amarcalim of Amsterdam*, 5589 (1828/29) [Igerot hapekidim veha'amarkalim me'amsterdam, 5589] (Jerusalem, 1978).

⁶² Der Orient, 14 Nov. 1843; 12 Dec. 1843.

East found their way there and enjoyed his hospitality. Meanwhile, their host was corresponding with almost all the leading rabbis of the time, so it was not surprising that he and his friend Prins took the initiative in the Orthodox resistance to the rise of Reform Judaism in Ashkenaz.⁶³

The three Lehren brothers formed the core of the Orthodox opposition to integration policy. Yet they never went so far as to break away from the 'Israelite denomination', for various reasons. First of all, even though the Lehrens and their sympathizers were critical of many types of integration measures, they shared in the dominant Orangist sentiment and the community's great appreciation of Dutch toleration. They felt the same patriotic allegiance to the Netherlands, even if they expressed it differently. Second, although the governing elites had their run-ins with the Lehrens, they also paid attention to the brothers' criticism. Their very commitment to Dutch moderation predisposed them to make concessions and avoid exacerbating the conflict. Finally, the Lehrens' traditional Jewish perspective emphasized the concept of the unity of the Jewish community. A schism—or Austritt, on the German model—would have been hard to reconcile with that, especially while the established national Ashkenazi denomination was under the leadership of an Orthodox rabbinate. They therefore, alongside their engagement with the transnational Ashkenazi network, maintained a long-term commitment to the Dutch Jewish community. The brothers took on such positions as parnas (congregational trustee), board member of the Amsterdam boys' orphanage Megadlé Jethomim, and administrator of the NIS.

While the Lehrens represented a combination of traditional, pre-modern Ashkenazi identity and new Dutch patriotism, the progressive elite was moving in a different direction. Their primary loyalty was to Dutch society, but that loyalty was put to the test in 1840, when a classic case of 'blood libel' occurred in Damascus. A Franciscan monk, Father Thomas, and his servant Ibrahim Amara disappeared and had last been seen in the Jewish district. The rumour soon spread that the two men had been murdered by the Jews so that their blood could be used in Passover matzot. The French consul, Count Ulysse de Ratti-Menton, who acted as the protector of the Catholic community in Damascus, lent his weight to the accusation and spread it more widely in the Middle East and Europe. A number of leading members of the Jewish community were arrested, tortured, and forced to confess. Partly thanks to the Lehrens' excellent network, the affair became widely known in Europe, inspiring an international Jewish campaign to save the Jews of Damascus.⁶⁴

An international Jewish alliance formed, led by the English Jewish aristocrat Sir Moses Montefiore and the French Jewish politician Adolphe Crémieux. They represented the sister organizations of the Chief Commission, the Board of Deputies of

⁶³ Wallet, Nieuwe Nederlanders, 178–92.

⁶⁴ P. J. W. Steenwijk, 'De Damascus-affaire (1840) en haar weerklank in Nederland', StR 20 (1986), 58-84.

British Jews and the Consistoire Central, but they sought a broad support base among western European Jews. The request to participate in the alliance put the Chief Commission in an awkward position. Despite their sympathy for the initiative, they did not dare to participate. As a Dutch organization, they felt that they lacked the necessary authority in the political domain; that was a matter for the foreign ministry. Identification with the Dutch nation prevailed over international Jewish solidarity. Montefiore and Crémieux did not let this stop them, but led a delegation to the Ottoman empire. The result of this intervention was that the Jews still being held prisoner were released and the sultan issued a decree prohibiting blood libel. Among Dutch Jews, the Damascus affair had aroused considerable attention. After the successful diplomatic mission, the Chief Commission tried to become involved after all, instructing all Jewish congregations to say a special mi sheberakh (blessing) for Crémieux and Montefiore and to add their names to the local roll of honour. This change in attitude was in part the result of the sympathetic coverage of the delegation in the European (and especially the Protestant) media. The fear of antagonism between Jews and other Dutch citizens proved to be unfounded.65

The Damascus affair demonstrated a new variety of transnational Jewish consciousness, especially among the Jews who were already highly integrated. This did not stem from a traditional sense of the Jewish nation but was an expression of solidarity with fellow Jews who were persecuted and oppressed. The expression of that solidarity through diplomacy, the media, and political pressure by great European powers was not only a new phenomenon, but also a sign of integration. As citizens, Jews now had access to national and regional media, could urge their political representatives to make the Netherlands take action, and had gained considerable experience in Dutch politics. All these elements converged in the response to the Damascus affair. 66

A second affair resulted in a structural form of this modern Jewish solidarity. In 1858 a 6-year-old Italian Jewish boy, Edgardo Mortara, was removed by the police from his parents' home in Bologna. He had received emergency baptism from a Catholic housekeeper after falling ill as a baby and was therefore Catholic according to the canon law of the time. Since Bologna was in the Papal States, the child was separated from his parents so that he could be raised as a Catholic. Despite vehement protest from the parents and the Italian Jewish community, Pope Pius IX would not give back the child. The informal Jewish diplomatic network was mobilized once again: Montefiore went to Rome to speak to the Pope, but failed to gain an audience. The support from European Jewish communities was overwhelming, and the Protestant and liberal press and politicians also stood behind the Mortara family. The affair became tangled

⁶⁵ B. Wallet, 'Dutch National Identity and Jewish International Solidarity: An Impossible Combination? Dutch Jewry and the Significance of the Damascus Affair (1840)', in Y. Kaplan (ed.), *The Dutch Intersection: The Jews and the Netherlands in Modern History* (Leiden, 2008), 319–30.

⁶⁶ J. Frankel, The Damascus Affair: "Ritual Murder," Politics, and the Jews in 1840 (Cambridge, 1997).

up with the debate about the future of Italy and fuelled fears of Catholic ultramontanism.⁶⁷

Edgardo Mortara was never returned to his family and ultimately became a priest. One result of this affair was that Crémieux and like-minded progressive Jews founded the Alliance Israélite Universelle (Universal Israelite Alliance; AIU) in Paris in 1860. This organization's mission was to defend Jewish interests systematically in the political sphere and to improve conditions for Jewish communities facing persecution and discrimination. The AIU's trump card was the emancipation of the west European Jews, who used their political networks to persuade European states to make the situation of Jewish human rights a priority in their international relations. In 1867 such efforts led France, Belgium, Italy, and the Netherlands to insist on the emancipation of the Swiss Jews when negotiating a new treaty with Switzerland. From the AIU's Paris headquarters, chapters were opened throughout much of Europe. The Dutch Jews were dedicated participants by this stage, and in 1864 they founded a Dutch chapter and many subchapters throughout the country. Leaders of the Dutch Jewish community, such as the former minister Michel Henri Godefroi and Abraham Carel Wertheim, took on administrative roles in support of both the AIU's diplomatic work and its growing role as a Jewish development organization. Pursuing a mission civilatrice greatly influenced by French colonialism, the AIU embarked on an impressive array of activities for Jewish communities that were not 'yet' emancipated, especially in the Middle East. It aimed to 'elevate' Jews in Maghreb and the Ottoman empire through francophone Jewish schools and social assistance, so that they could follow more or less the same path of integration as Jews in Europe—but integration into European, rather than the local, culture.

Just as the Lehren brothers' circles made use of their connections to the transnational Ashkenazi community, the Portuguese Jews in the Netherlands had their long-established ties to the western Sephardi diaspora, with sister and daughter congregations in Hamburg, London, Bordeaux, the Dutch colonies in the western hemisphere, and the United States. In the late eighteenth century, this network had lost its traditional economic importance, but it remained in place for other purposes. The western Sephardi diaspora played a key role in the ongoing migration of Portuguese Jews; it was still the network used for exchanging religious functionaries, and it created solidarity, a fact that became clear when the Sephardi synagogue in Hamburg went up in flames in 1842. The strongest connection between many of the people in this network, besides family ties and shared rituals, was a glorious shared history, celebrated in a growing culture of remembrance. The Esnoga in Amsterdam and Beth Haim cemetery in Ouderkerk played a central role in this project and became not only symbols of the Dutch Jewish symbiosis but also expressions of the magnificent past of the western Sephardi diaspora.

⁶⁷ D. I. Kertzer, The Kidnapping of Edgardo Mortara (New York, 1997).

While Dutch Jews were engaged with Jews in other countries in both traditional and modern ways, the transnational Jewish community was also engaged with the Netherlands. As one of the first countries to have emancipated the Jews, it continued to attract close attention. The Netherlands was a shining example to many Jews in central and eastern Europe. The successes of Dutch Jews—appointments as a judge, professor, or minister—were reported in detail in the international Jewish press. At the same time, especially among German Jews, there was more than a little surprise that the unparalleled political and legal opportunities available to Dutch Jews had not led to an intellectual reconsideration and reformulation of Judaism, like that which had taken place in the German states. The moderate Orthodox profile of Dutch Jewry, as it emerged over the years, could not count on much sympathy from supporters of Reform Judaism. One of them, the Orientalist Joseph Dernburg (later Derenbourg), stayed in Amsterdam from 1834 to 1839 as a private tutor to the Bischoffsheim banking family and was surprised by what he saw as the traditional character of the Jewish congregations there.⁶⁸

Conclusion: Judaism in Transition

Perspectives in the historical literature on the period from 1814 to 1870 differ greatly. In almost every case, the decisive factors are, first, the author's attitude towards the simple fact of 'emancipation' and, second, the assessment of how emancipation was put into practice. In pre-war historical writing, authors such as Sigmund Seeligmann, David Mozes Sluys, and Jacques Zwarts saw emancipation as a high point in Dutch Jewish history and an expression of the symbiosis between the country and its Jewish community. The process of integration that followed was regarded as unilinear and progressive, culminating in a distinctive, unique Dutch Jewish profile. According to this narrative, while Jewish history in other places was marked by discrimination and antisemitism, the different groups in the Netherlands lived together in harmony.⁶⁹

There was a shift in perspective after the Second World War, for two reasons. First of all, the events of the war period, 1940–5, raised the question of whether they could be separated from the period of emancipation that had preceded them. Had the integration of the Dutch Jews really been such an exemplary process? In that case, why had it been so easy to isolate them from the rest of the Dutch population? Might there not have been an undercurrent of antisemitism present in Dutch society the whole time? Secondly, the popularity of Zionism led to ideological questioning of the concept of 'emancipation'. While emancipation reduced Jewish identity to its religious dimension

⁶⁸ See e.g. the interesting impression of Dutch Jewish religious life in *Wissenschaftliche Zeitung für jüdische Theologie* (1836), 1, 581–6. A detailed analysis is provided by T. Kollatz, 'Fascination and Discomfort: The Ambivalent Image of the Netherlands in the Jewish-German Press in the 1830s and 1840s', *StR* 32 (1998), 43–66.
⁶⁹ S. Seeligmann, *De emancipatie der Joden in Nederland* (Amsterdam, 1913).

at the expense of a Jewish national sense, Zionism instead advocated a reduction to the nation. From that perspective, 'emancipation' was not the Dutch Jewish community's greatest triumph but its downfall.

These two themes had a lasting impact on the work of the two leading Dutch Jewish historians of the post-war period. Jaap Meijer gradually developed an increasingly pessimistic interpretation of the Jewish nineteenth century, viewing the emancipation of 1796 as a farewell to the Jewish nation and the beginning of the increasing, self-inflicted isolation of Dutch Jewry. According to Meijer, Jewish transnational contacts decreased, and Jewish life turned sour, going into gradual decline. As the ties to global Judaism were lost, the Dutch Jewish community began to wither and lulled itself to sleep with the fairy tale of Dutch toleration. 70 Jozeph Melkman, known after his emigration to Israel as Jozeph Michman, shared this critical view of 'emancipation', which he strongly believed was a product of French radical Enlightenment thinking rather than the result of a supposed tradition of Dutch toleration. Yet Michman arrived at a different conclusion from Meijer: he saw a great deal of social opposition to Jews and signs of moderate antisemitism. On his account, that was what had prevented complete integration and led to the survival, alongside the religious Jewish identity, of a national sense that had held the Dutch Jewish community together. That national sense had formed the basis of continuing contact with Jews across the border, especially in Germany. Michman therefore rejected the idea of isolation.⁷¹

In a 1995 publication entitled *The History of the Jews in the Netherlands*, the *grande dame* of the field, Rena(te) Fuks-Mansfeld, added an interpretation of her own. Although she saw emancipation as a positive change, she shared Michman's belief that the subsequent integration process was a difficult one. Yet this was not, she contended, because of antisemitism on the part of the state or society, but owing to the initial conditions within the Jewish community. It had a lot of catching up to do in both economic and social terms, and the authorities had gone to considerable lengths to assist. But despite these efforts, it was only after 1860 that economic conditions had begun to improve for the Jews and larger sections of the community had begun to reap the benefits of emancipation.⁷²

What have we learned from this new chapter, into which much recent research has been incorporated? A first lesson is that the political and legal emancipation achieved in

⁷⁰ J. Meijer, Erfenis der emancipatie: Het Nederlandse jodendom in de eerste helft van de 19e eeuw (Haarlem, 1963); id., Zij lieten hun sporen na: Joodse bijdragen tot de Nederlandse beschaving (Utrecht, 1964).

⁷¹ J. Michman, 'The Influence of German Jewry on Dutch Jewry in the Nineteenth Century' (Heb.), in id. (ed.), *Mechkarim al toledot yahadut Holland*, iv (Jerusalem, 1984), 27–43; id., 'The Impact of German-Jewish Modernization on Dutch Jewry', in J. Katz (ed.), *Toward Modernity: The European Jewish Model* (New Brunswick, NJ, 1987), 171–87; id., *History of Dutch Jewry*; id., H. Beem, and D. Michman, *Pinkas: Geschiedenis van de joodse gemeenschap in Nederland* (Amsterdam, 1992).

⁷² R. G. Fuks-Mansfeld, 'Moeizame aanpassing (1814–1870)', in J. C. H. Blom et al. (eds.), *Geschiedenis van de joden in Nederland* (Amsterdam, 1995), 207–43.

1796, which King William I continued unabated in his Kingdom of the Netherlands, must be clearly distinguished from the processes of social and economic integration. After 1814 political emancipation was never at serious risk, and it gave the Dutch Jewish community a stable position. Social and economic integration took a great deal longer, and in the period before 1870 its positive effects were experienced mainly by the relatively small Jewish elite, in the form of academic education, official positions, and political offices. The class system was just as strong in the Dutch Jewish community as it was in Dutch society as a whole—and the matriculation system resisted efforts at democratization even in the wake of 1848.

Secondly, the 'Jewish case' must be examined against the background of the formation and development of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in general. It was in fact not only Jews but everyone who had to integrate into the newly created centralized state. Many measures for Jewish integration were either generic in nature or showed strong parallels to measures for other religious or minority groups. The centralization and 'denominalization' of Jewish life ran exactly parallel to the public programme of incorporating Protestant and Roman Catholic religious life into the state apparatus. Integration policy, with language policy as its centrepiece, also applied to regional minorities such as the Frisians and Limburgers. Yet as the only non-Christian minority group, Jews did have a unique religious identity that sometimes led to a distinctive status. From 1806 to 1857, for instance, the Netherlands had separate Jewish state schools for the poor alongside its Christian ones. That also explains the great extent to which, until around 1850, the integration process involved the Jewish community *as a whole*, whereas in later decades integration continued even as the Jews were divided along socio-economic lines and drawn into larger political movements.

Thirdly, it is important to note that the Jewish community was at a stage where the meaning of being Jewish was very much in question. No blueprint yet existed for the form Judaism should take in a modern nation-state where Jews had become citizens. Similar questions were being raised throughout western and central Europe and answered in many different ways. It was only gradually, in the years leading up to 1870, that the new meaning of Judaism in the Netherlands took shape. It was the product of multiple forces acting simultaneously in Dutch society and in neighbouring Jewish communities. One aspect of the 'nationalization' of the community was the embrace of a Dutch self-image, which involved a preference for virtues perceived as typically Dutch, such as moderation and tolerance. This was linked to a traditional Jewish discourse of unity; the 'Jewish Nation' might have disappeared, but the centrally administered 'Israelite denomination' attached no less importance to keeping the Jewish community together. The newly coined term 'Dutch Israelite' combined those two aspects. In the emerging religious landscape, which included eastern European ultra-Orthodoxy, German Reform Judaism, and German Orthodox Austrittsgemeinden (schismatic congregations), this entailed a preference for a unified moderate Orthodox congregation. Under an Orthodox rabbinate, Jews remained united across the spectrum from very strict to extremely progressive. This choice was celebrated as characteristic of Dutch culture, but in many ways resembled the situation in France (centred on the Consistoire Central) and in the British United Synagogue (1870).

Finally, we must conclude that the dichotomy between integration and 'nationalization' on the one hand and Jewish distinctiveness and transnational identity on the other is too simplistic. Claims of isolation or of a surviving pre-modern transnational Jewish consciousness fail to do justice to the way Dutch Jews tied together their divergent loyalties. Jews of all stripes, from strictly Orthodox to Reform, embraced the Dutch national identity, which they experienced as a continuation of eighteenth-century Orangism. At the same time, they still felt and expressed a connection to Jews in other countries, partly through the traditional imagined communities of Ashkenaz and the western Sephardi diaspora, and partly by mapping out new routes. Modern Jewish diplomacy and Jewish philanthropy and altruism were expressions of both international Jewish solidarity and modern citizenship. In certain political domains there was occasional friction between two loyalties, but in many cases they went together naturally.

In 1870, when the state withdrew once and for all from Jewish life and Dutch Jews had to stand on their own two feet, they could look back at a period of great transitions, on the reorganization of Jewish life, and on the articulation of a distinctive new identity. From this new starting point the task ahead was to stake out an independent, self-reliant position.

DUTCH JEWS, THE JEWISH DUTCH, AND JEWS IN THE NETHERLANDS 1870–1940

J. C. H. BLOM AND J. J. CAHEN

During the half-century after 1870, the Netherlands underwent a process of accelerated change, expansion, and prosperity. This dynamism, visible in almost every sector of society, was linked to broader international tendencies. Economic growth and industrialization led to increasing prosperity, in which even the lowest social strata enjoyed a growing share. The dominant modern capitalist system made the social structure more like that of a class society, although aspects based on *Stand*, or status group, remained. Politically, a process of democratization took place, in which first the middle classes and then the working-class population exerted influence through mass organizations. In the religious domain, numerous forms of secularization existed side by side with processes of confessionalization and the intensification of religious life. Culturally, it was a time of impressive achievements in science and art. Nationalism and an emphatic sense of a distinct national character went hand in hand with a continuing process of social segmentation (later known as pillarization) and further-reaching internationalization in many areas.

After the First World War plunged Europe into a deep crisis, which essentially continued in diverse forms until after 1945, the Netherlands was no longer so dynamic. Yet this was not a time of stagnation. Because the Netherlands was not involved in the

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First World War, the two decades after 1918 can be more accurately described as years of consolidation and of building on earlier achievements. Furthermore, the foundations were laid—mainly in response to the social effects of the economic crisis—for developments that would come to fruition only after the Second World War. The bourgeois Netherlands, organized into religious and ideological 'pillars' (see below), felt most of the impact of the European crisis in a mitigated form, the main exception being the economic depression of the 1930s.

The new dynamism that characterized the country as a whole from 1870 onwards was unquestionably present in the Jewish population. In that year, after long deliberation, the Portugees-Israëlitisch Kerkgenootschap (the country's Sephardi denomination, PIK) and the Nederlands-Israëlitisch Kerkgenootschap (the Orthodox Ashkenazi denomination, NIK) were reorganized in accordance with the division of church and state enshrined in the Constitution of 1848. Dr Joseph Hirsch Dünner (PLATE 49), appointed chief rabbi of the North Holland region in 1874, was to leave his stamp on Jewish religious and synagogal life for decades, together with the upper-middle-class parnasim. His term in office would be marked by the formation of a broad Orthodox establishment in the religious sphere, tightly organized religious services, and the acceptance of looser observance of Jewish precepts by many people affiliated with the denomination, a sign that secularization had reached Jewish circles. Most importantly, social dynamics offered greater scope than in the past for the development both of the Jewish community as a whole and of each individual and each subgroup separately, including Jewish immigrants. After legal emancipation (that is, the grant of equal civil rights) in 1796, only a limited number of Jews, mostly from the social and intellectual elite, had assumed a more active role in Dutch economic, political, social, and cultural life. Most Jews, especially those living in poverty, instead remained strongly focused on the internal affairs of their own group, just as they had been in the time of the 'Jewish Nation', under the ancien régime. Now all that changed. Emancipation took on economic, social, and cultural dimensions for almost everyone, in a kind of delayed implementation of the emancipation decree of 1796.

This development involved strong tendencies towards the integration, acculturation, and assimilation of Jews and the Jewish community (or communities) into Dutch society. It was not a one-sided process in which Jews adapted to a well-established and clearly defined Dutch way of life. In the dynamic context of the period, what took place was an interaction in which Jews were certainly influenced by broader developments and participated in them, but also made significant contributions to those

¹ For the substantial shift in perspectives on the concept of assimilation in recent decades, see e.g. M. Mandel, 'Assimilation and Cultural Exchange in Modern Jewish History', in J. Cohen and M. Rosman (eds.), *Rethinking European Jewish History* (Oxford, 2009), 72–92, and D. Sorkin, 'The New 'Mosaik': Jews and European Culture, 1750–1940', in J. Frishman and H. Berg (eds.), *Dutch Jewry in a Cultural Maelstrom*, 1880–1940 (Amsterdam, 2007), II–29.

developments through their own activities. All this could be manifested in many ways, whether in the Jews' outward conduct, inner orientation, or social status. At the two extremes, Jews could either sever all their Jewish ties and be fully absorbed into the larger national community,2 or they could deliberately maintain Orthodoxy in their own circle, in either a traditional or a modernized form. In between, there were many shades of grey and mixed allegiances, both to broader Dutch society (or parts of it) and to Jewish roots and traditions and the precepts that were part of them. It became increasingly clear that any talk of the Jewish community, or the Jews, was an oversimplification. Differentiation became the norm, with occasional friction between Jews regarding the choices they had made. The internal flourishing of Jewish life went together with contributions, often remarkable, by individual Jews to society in all its facets. Full and active participation in society (in short, integration) was compatible in principle with the conscious choice to lead a Jewish life. The one did not rule out the other. As in the Christian segments of the population, this differentiation was partly the result of the processes of secularization: the waning influence of religion and denomination on individual choices, apostasy, interfaith marriage, and the abandonment of ancestral traditions (in the case of Jews, the observance of the sabbath and dietary laws).

Yet the process of integration, acculturation, and assimilation had its limits. For instance, very few people chose to melt into Dutch society completely through baptism and mixed marriage, leaving no trace of their Jewish background. Jewishness or Jewish origins were an important characteristic for almost everyone, whether because of a conscious choice to lead a Jewish life as a result of experiences with antisemitism or for some other reason. Even those who wished to assimilate and emphatically did not consider themselves to be Jews were repeatedly reminded of their Jewish background by the people around them. In Jewish circles, the term 'assimilant' almost always had negative undertones, suggesting a betrayal of one's own origins. Yet for many years, there was hardly any sense of an ominous or urgent 'Jewish question' in the Netherlands. That was usually seen as a foreign phenomenon, which often inspired feelings of solidarity with Jews persecuted elsewhere, at first because of their shared religion or ancestry, and later also in a Zionist context. It was only after the First World War, when larger groups of refugees began to arrive from eastern Europe, and especially in the 1930s with the arrival of German refugees, that a new sensitivity to Jewish origins and Jewish issues took root in the Netherlands. Antisemitism, which had always existed in diverse forms, began to intensify. Even secularized, integrated, and assimilated Jews were confronted, sometimes forcefully, with the Jewish background that they evidently could not escape.

² T. M. Endelman, Leaving the Jewish Fold: Conversion and Radical Assimilation in Modern Jewish History (Princeton, 2015); P. Tammes, 'Abandoning Judaism: A Life History Perspective on Disaffiliation and Conversion to Christianity among Prewar Amsterdam Jews', Advances in Life Course Research, 17 (2012), 81–92.

Demographics

The Jews formed only a small minority in Dutch society; in this period, they made up slightly more than 2 per cent of the population for just a few decades. In absolute terms, they grew into a community of more than 100,000 people from about 1900 onwards (see Tables 7.1 and 7.2). The main sources for the numbers of Jews in the Netherlands are the population registers and the decennial censuses—although the one planned for 1940 never took place. The Jews can be identified in those sources as those who self-reported that they belonged to the PIK or NIK. That limits the relevance of the figures if a broader definition of 'Jewish' is applied, especially as, in the course of the twentieth century, the secularization process becomes clearly visible in the rising number of Dutch people registered as having no religious affiliation. On the other hand, even Jews with relatively weak ties to their ancestral religion still generally considered and reported themselves to be 'Israelites' (see the 'Religion and Culture' section of Chapter 6 for background information about the use of this term).

The detailed account of demographic characteristics and tendencies that follows does not cover all variations among Dutch Jews with any precision, since the main source available is the population censuses mentioned above. For instance, it tells us nothing about such matters as the different degrees of intensity with which Jews felt themselves to be Jewish, had a sense of belonging to a particular Jewish congregation, or, more generally, felt involved in 'the' Jewish community. Take the example of attendance at religious services. It had long been necessary to hire additional halls for the High Holy Days of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur because there was not enough room in the synagogue, while the regular Saturday services—not to mention daily services—were less frequently attended. In many cases, the sabbath was not strictly observed. That was as true as it ever had been, and probably more so. Some chose no longer to come to the synagogue at all, or only for the Kol Nidre service on the eve of Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement). There were many different levels of religious activity and of adaptation to mainstream culture. The nature and extent of contact with and acceptance by Dutch non-Jews also varied. In some respects, the Jewish community can be regarded as relatively tight-knit. Circumcision, the barmitzvah, and Jewish wedding and funeral ceremonies were among the traditional customs still widely practised. The Friday-evening celebration was a cherished ritual in many households.

Considered as a whole, the period 1870–1940 shows a clear growth in the Jewish

³ E. Boekman's study *Demografie van de joden in Nederland* (Amsterdam, 1936) laid the groundwork and was for many years the main source for the study of the demographics of the Jews in the Netherlands. Other very noteworthy studies have been published since then, especially in recent decades, by researchers such as F. van Poppel and above all P. Tammes, almost all in the form of articles in scholarly journals. For a survey, see P. Tammes, 'Demografische ontwikkeling van joden in Nederland vanaf hun burgerlijke gelijkstelling tot aan de Duitse bezetting', in K. Matthijs, B. van de Putte, J. Kok, and H. Bras (eds.), *Leven in de Lage Landen: Historisch-demografisch onderzoek in Vlaanderen en Nederland. Jaarboek* 2010 (Leuven, 2010), 239–69.

Table 7.1 The Jewish population of the Netherlands, 1869–19	Table 7.1	The Jewish	population	of the Netherlands,	1869-193)
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Year	Dutch Israelite Congregation	Portuguese Israelite Congregation	Total	% of Dutch population	% growth of Jewish population	% growth of Dutch population
1869	64,478	3,525	68,003	1.90	_	_
1879	78,075	3,618	81,693	2.04	20.13	12.10
1889	92,524	5,070	97,324	2.15	19.13	12.43
1899	98,343	5,645	103,988	2.04	6.85	13.14
1909	99,785	6,624	106,409	1.81	2.32	14.77
1920	109,293	5,930	115,223	1.68	8.29	17.19
1930	106,723	5,194	111,917	1.41	-2.87	15.59

Source: E. Boekman, Demografie van de Joden in Nederland (Amsterdam, 1936); P. van Praag, 'Demografische ontwikkeling van de Joden in Nederland', Mens en Maatschappij, 47 (1972), 167–83; R. Cohen, 'Boekman's Legacy: Historical Demography of the Jews in the Netherlands', DJH, i. 519–40; P. Tammes, 'Demografische ontwikkeling van joden in Nederland vanaf hun burgerlijke gelijkstelling tot aan de Duitse bezetting', in K. Matthijs et al. (eds.), Leven in de Lage Landen: Historisch-demografisch onderzoek in Vlaanderen en Nederland (Leuven, 2010).

population, from around 68,000 in 1869 to a peak of more than 115,000 in 1920 and still as many as 112,000 in 1930. Some 5 to 6 per cent belonged to the PIK. In the early years, the Jewish population also grew in relative terms, from a starting point of 1.9 per cent of the Dutch population in 1869 to 2.15 per cent in 1889 (see Table 7.1). This was followed, however, by a drop to 1.41 per cent in 1930 (see Table 7.2). The rapid growth of the Jewish population from 1869 to 1889, faster than that of the total Dutch population, is especially noteworthy. The main explanatory factor is a drop in death rates (including infant mortality), which began earlier and was more pronounced among Jews. The later slowing of growth can be explained primarily by the drop in birth rates, which was greater among Jews than in the total population (with scattered local exceptions). Marriages that took place before 1876 in which the woman was 24 years old or younger at the time of marriage led to more children among Jews than among any other religious or belief group (almost 11 children in each such family, compared to almost 8 for the entire Dutch population). In other words, many Jewish families were very large. After that time, however, this figure decreased rapidly; this was partly due to the rapidly increasing level of education, especially among women. The figure for marriages that took place between 1906 and 1910 was 3.37 children per family for Jews compared to 5.20 for the whole population. Only a few small, progressive Protestant denominations had a slightly lower figure, namely 3.31. This trend affected the age structure of the Jews in the Netherlands. The age group ranging from newborns to 9-year-olds, as a share of

the Jewish population, fell from 21.1 per cent in 1899 to 13.6 per cent in 1930. In the general population, these figures were 24.3 and 21.1 per cent respectively. Conversely, older age groups grew in proportional terms. In other words, the Jewish population experienced demographic ageing in the decades after 1900 and faced the prospect of a shrinking Jewish community in absolute terms as well, as shown by the slight decline in the numbers of people registered with Jewish denominations after 1920. In this context, it is important to note that demographic trends can never simply be extrapolated. And looking at those same figures from a different perspective, we can see them as reflecting early and rapid modernization among Jews. Other segments of Dutch society developed a similar pattern only later and more slowly.

Besides birth and death rates, migration is another crucial factor in population growth or decline. Until the 1930s, however, it was of minor importance to the Jewish population in the Netherlands. Although the Netherlands did receive a part of the waves of migration from eastern Europe, most of those migrants travelled onwards, thanks in part to large financial incentives from support committees. The largest group went to the Americas, and far smaller numbers to Palestine. Between 1883 and 1913, the Montefiore Vereniging in Rotterdam helped at least 26,000 Jewish migrants to travel on from the Netherlands to another destination. In Amsterdam, almost 11,000 migrants received assistance from various aid committees. Very few of them settled in the Netherlands. Of the 2,100 Jewish immigrants who remained in Amsterdam between 1880 and 1914, 47 per cent came from eastern Europe—too few to have a major effect on the Jewish population figures, but enough to form a few distinctively eastern European Jewish subgroups in the city.⁴

The same cannot be said of the Jewish migrants who fled Germany in the 1930s. Many of them travelled on, but a substantial number settled in the Netherlands, as shown by the registry of Jews in the Netherlands kept by order of the occupying regime in 1941 (see Table 7.2). Compared to the censuses that yielded the pre-1930 figures, the wartime registry uses a different criterion of Jewishness—namely, the number of Jewish grandparents. According to those figures, there were approximately 140,000 'full Jews' and more than 20,000 'half-Jews' and 'quarter-Jews' living in the Netherlands. Almost 15,000 of those 140,000 had German nationality, and another group, more than 7,500, had another non-Dutch nationality or were stateless. Clearly, immigration made a large contribution to the growth of the Jewish population from 1930 onwards—and of course, this was most true after 1933. Because this flow of migrants included only a relatively small number of children, it reinforced the demographic ageing of the Jewish population.⁵

Besides birth, death, and migration, conversion to a Christian denomination and

⁴ P. Tammes (ed.), Oostjoodse Passanten en Blijvers: Aankomst, opvang, transmigratie en vestiging van Joden uit Rusland in Amsterdam en Rotterdam 1882–1914 (Amsterdam, 2013).

⁵ Tammes, 'Demografische ontwikkeling', 264.

Table 7.2 The composition of the Jewish population in the Netherlands according to the
1941 census

Status	Nationality				Religion			
	Dutch	German	Other	Total	Jewish (Ashkenazi and Sephardi)	Roman Catholic	Protestant	None
Full Jews	117,999	14,381	7,621	140,001	125,515	690	1,225	12,571
Half- and quarter-Jews	19,237	1,086	562	20,885	395	3,131	5,021	12,338
Total	137,236	15,467	8,183	160,886	125,910	3,821	6,246	24,909

Source: Statistiek der bevolking van Joodschen bloede in Nederland (The Hague, 1942). The count was based on the number of grandparents registered as members of a Jewish denomination.

departure from the Jewish community also had an impact on statistical trends in the country's Jewish population. In fact, this impact was minor. Both Protestant and Catholic groups made energetic attempts to encourage Jews to convert to Christianity, but to almost no avail. Conversion or reconversion to a Jewish denomination was just as rare, although it did take place. In 1941 only a little more than 1 per cent of the 'full Jews' were registered as members of Christian denominations. It was more common for them to have no religious affiliation, although less common than in groups of Christian ancestry. Among those registered as 'full Jews' by the occupying regime, less than 10 per cent were listed as having no religious affiliation. Not surprisingly, converts and the unaffiliated constituted much higher percentages of 'half-' and 'quarter-Jews'. This has a great deal to do with the phenomenon of mixed marriage. For a long while, such marriages were very rare events, but in the twentieth century the number rose steadily, although less so among Jews than among Catholics, Protestants, and the unaffiliated. Figures for Amsterdam show that in the period from 1901 to 1934, the proportion of Jews married to non-Jews rose from 6 to 17 per cent of all Jews who married. In the second half of the 1930s, this percentage ceased to grow and even declined a little. From this perspective, the Jewish community remained comparatively closed.⁶

One striking difference between the Jewish and non-Jewish populations was their geographical distribution. To a growing extent, Jews lived in the major cities, especially in the west of the country, and most particularly in Amsterdam (see Table 7.3). The number of Jews in Amsterdam rose from about 30,000 in 1869 to almost 69,000 in 1920 (partly because the city annexed surrounding communities). In the 1930 census, the figure was around 65,500. As a proportion of the Jews in the Netherlands, this was an increase from almost 45 per cent in 1869 to between 55 and 60 per cent from 1889

⁶ P. Tammes, 'Jewish–Gentile Intermarriage in Pre-War Amsterdam', *The History of the Family*, 15 (2010), 298–315.

Table 7.3 Regional distribution of the Jewish population, 1879–1930 (%)									
Year	Amsterdam	Rotterdam	The Hague	Rest of Holland/ Utrecht	North	East	South		
1879	49.5	8.1	5.0	9.3	12.2	10.8	4.9		
1909	58.0	9.5	6.1	5.9	8.6	9.0	2.9		
1930	58.6	9.4	9.4	6.2	6.2	7.9	2.4		

Source: H. van Solinge and M. de Vries (eds.), De Joden in Nederland Anno 2000: Demografisch profiel en binding aan het jodendom (Amsterdam, 2001), 34.

onwards. The internal migration to the *mediene* (a term used in the Dutch context for Jews in rural areas, or for all Jews living outside Amsterdam) that had begun in the first half of the nineteenth century thus transformed into its opposite. That did not always mean a decline in absolute numbers at the local level, since the Jewish population as a whole continued to grow until 1920. But between 1879 and 1930, the number of communities (*gemeenten* in the political sense: cities, towns, and villages) where Jews lived fell from 464 to 407 (out of a total of 1,078 Dutch communities) (see Maps 7.1 and 7.2). In 1930 more than 80 per cent of the Jews in the Netherlands lived in seven cities, each one home to more than 1,000 Jews. Besides Amsterdam, these cities were The Hague and Rotterdam, with more than 10,000 Jews each, Groningen, with more than 2,500, and Apeldoorn, Arnhem, and Utrecht, each with just over 1,000. There were also many communities with a very small number of Jews. By 1930 the number of communities with fifty Jews or fewer had risen to approximately 80 per cent of the number of communities where Jews lived.

This stagnation or decline outside the major cities, which were mostly in the west, was not universal, but the few exceptions fit the general trend of urbanization. Jewish communities in commuter towns such as Hilversum, Bussum, and Zandvoort, as well as in places with robust economic and industrial development in Twente (Enschede and Rijssen) and North Brabant (Eindhoven, Oss, and Tilburg), went on growing in the 1930s. In Apeldoorn, this continued growth in the number of Jews was due to the establishment of the Jewish nursing home for the mentally ill, Het Apeldoornsche Bosch.

In much the same way that Amsterdam was the centre of Jewish life in the Netherlands, its old Jewish quarter was the centre of Jewish life in the city (PLATE 48). Until 1940 this eastern section of the old city centre was inhabited mainly by Jews, and it retained what was seen as its typically Jewish character. Even so, quite a few Jews—those who could afford to—moved to other parts of town. The 'voluntary ghetto' thus

⁷ The term *mediene*, as used in the Netherlands, usually relates to the entire country with the exception of Amsterdam. Strictly speaking, that is not entirely correct, and *mediene* has traditionally referred to Jewish communities outside major settlements. This chapter conforms to the Dutch use of the term, however.

gradually changed into the district for poor Jews, which although it struck outsiders as picturesque, was also penurious, polluted, and dilapidated. As the city expanded, as the general increase in prosperity reached the Jewish proletariat, and as city politics became more focused on slum clearance and better public housing, the situation began to change. More and more Jews moved out of the old Jewish quarter. Elsewhere in the city, in the new districts built since the late nineteenth century and mostly in the twentieth century, new neighbourhoods emerged with relatively large numbers of Jews. Some of these bordered on the old Jewish quarter. For instance, relatively large numbers of Jews lived in the Afrikanerbuurt, in and around Weesperzijde, in the Plantagebuurt, or in the Oosterparkbuurt. Each of these neighbourhoods had a distinctive social profile (see Map 7.3).

By the late 1930s not only the old Jewish quarter but also the Weesperbuurt and surrounding area and the Afrikanerbuurt (Transvaal) had a majority of Jewish residents. There were also scattered streets and sections of streets that were mainly Jewish. For example, many Jewish refugees from eastern Europe settled around Blasiusstraat and Nieuwe Kerkstraat after the First World War. Wealthier German refugees had a preference for the Zuid district in the 1930s. Late in that decade, the then new Rivierenbuurt also had quite a few Jewish residents.8 Tramline 8, which linked various neighbourhoods where many Jews lived, was sometimes called the Jewish tram. There is evidence that some of the tendencies discussed above, such as secularization and mixed marriage, were stronger in the wealthier neighbourhoods outside the old Jewish quarter, where more direct and frequent interaction with non-Jews promoted acculturation and integration. The fact that large groups of Jews began living close together in the new neighbourhoods shows that this process had its limits. There were also traditional Jewish neighbourhoods in a few other cities with relatively large numbers of Jews, usually near the synagogue: around Folkingestraat in Groningen, near the Put and Sacramentstraat in Leeuwarden, between St Jacobstraat, the Spui, Grote Marktstraat, and Wagenstraat in The Hague (and also in Scheveningen, home to many Jews of eastern European origin),9 and to a lesser degree around the Boompjes in Rotterdam.

Economic and Social Structures

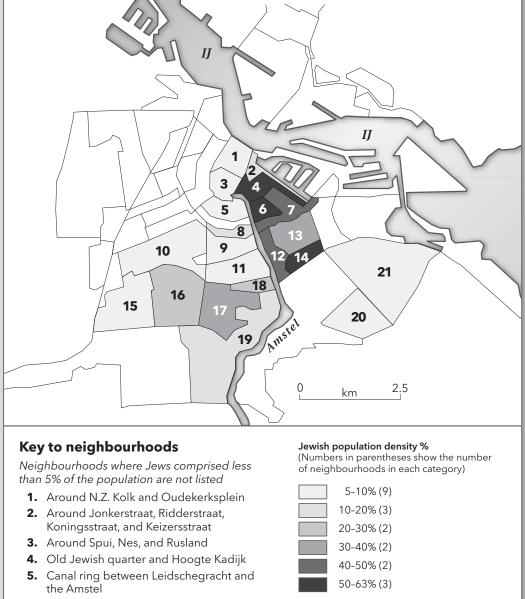
The new dynamism in the national and international economy after 1870 created opportunities for the Jews in the Netherlands. Under the *ancien régime*, Jews had been excluded from some professions, but that practice had come to an end earlier in the nineteenth century. In this period, Jews could be found in almost all professions. At the same time, old traditions and historically rooted structures remained visible

⁸ Tammes, 'Residential Segregation of Jews in Amsterdam on the Eve of the Shoah'.

⁹ See W. Willems and H. Verbeek, *Hier woonden wij: Hoe een stad zijn Joodse verleden herontdekt* (Amsterdam, 2015).







- **6.** Around Weesperstraat
- 7. Around Plantage and Muiderschans
- 8. Around Weteringschans
- 9. Oude Pijp
- **10.** Museumbuurt, Concertgebouwbuurt, and Willemsparkbuurt
- 11. Nieuwe Pijp
- 12. Around Weesperzijde
- 13. Oosterparkbuurt
- 14. Afrikaansche buurt

- 15. Stadionbuurt
- 16. Around Apollolaan
- 17. Around Noorder and Zuider Amstellaan
- **18.** Around Amstelkade between Maasstraat and the Amstel
- **19.** Around Trompenburgerstraat and Amstelparkbad
- **20.** Garden village Watergraafsmeer
- **21.** Watergraafsmeer east of the Middenweg

Map 7.3 Density of the Jewish population of Amsterdam by neighbourhood as a percentage of total population, 1941

among the Jewish population.¹⁰ Economic growth and the ongoing expansion of the new middle classes led to upward social mobility for Jews. Poverty decreased without disappearing entirely, the proportion of unskilled labourers declined by more than half, there was a conspicuous emergence of new wealth—successful Jewish entrepreneurs founded a few of the largest Dutch companies¹¹—and, most significantly, many Jews joined the new and highly diverse middle class. This upward social mobility was stronger among Jews who severed their ties with their religious denominations than among those who remained members. Analysis of the figures for 1941 has shown that Jews who were no longer registered as religious were considerably better represented in Amsterdam's higher social strata than Jews still affiliated with a religious denomination, Jewish or otherwise. This shows that, for religious Jews in particular, there were still lines that were difficult to cross. Besides the opposition they still encountered to their participation in Dutch society, other factors were the powerful influence of tradition and, especially for Orthodox Jews, the Jewish way of life (observing the sabbath and dietary laws).

The most noteworthy aspects of the occupational structure among Jews included their continuing over-representation in all varieties of trade and commerce and their under-representation in the agricultural sector, with the exception of the cattle trade. Among industry and craft occupations, where Jews were slightly under-represented, their overwhelming dominance in the diamond industry (which was concentrated in Amsterdam) is striking. Around the turn of the century, two-thirds of Amsterdam Jews worked in trade and in the diamond industry. In many respects, these two economic activities shaped the face of Jewish Amsterdam—especially the diamond industry, whose importance went far beyond its fairly large contribution to employment. Great importance was attached to 'The Business' (Het Vak) in Jewish circles. The years 1870-6 were a time of rapid growth for the industry, known as the Cape Period (Kaapse Tijd), a phrase that later took on mythical overtones. Wages were then exceptionally high. In 1864 there were around 1,400 diamond workers in Amsterdam, the majority Jewish; of the fifty owners of diamond companies (mostly small businesses), forty-three were Jewish. In the Cape Period, these figures rose swiftly, and larger companies emerged. The number of diamond workers in the Netherlands, some of whom also spent time working in Antwerp, rose to more than 6,000. Even after this peak period, business

The sketch at the start of this section is based on a wide range of social, economic, and historical research of a highly quantitative nature, with P. Tammes's "Hack, Pack, Sack": Occupational Structure, Status and Mobility of Jews in Amsterdam', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 43/I (2012), 1–26, playing a central role, as well as on various qualitative descriptions such as journalists' impressions, novels, and plays, together with policy statements and other documents from the realm of politics and public administration. Since the dominant focus of the studies is almost always Amsterdam, much of this section relates specifically to that city and may not fully apply to the situation elsewhere in the country.

¹¹ See e.g. H. Berg, T. Wijsenbeek, and E. Fischer (eds.), Venter, fabriqueur, fabrikant: Joodse ondernemers en ondernemingen in Nederland 1796–1940 (Amsterdam, 1994).

continued to boom (with fluctuations) and wages were reasonable. The total number of diamond workers went on rising, reaching 8,000–9,000 around the turn of the century and 11,000 in 1920. Over the years, the number of 'Christians' in the industry also increased, but more among the labourers than among the jewellers. After 1920 the industry went into rapid decline, partly because of stiff foreign competition, especially from Antwerp. The number of diamond workers dropped to 6,000 in 1929 and 5,000 in 1930, many of whom became jobless. The rise and fall of this industry had a wider impact (as did that of the diamond trade, albeit in a different manner). Many Jews were indirectly connected with it or dependent on it. That made the diamond industry, more than any other sector in which Jews worked, a crucial factor in the identity of Amsterdam's Jewish residents. In this respect, economics and culture were tightly interwoven.¹²

Around 1900, Jewish employment was far more concentrated in two or three sectors than it had been half a century earlier. In later decades it returned to being more distributed over a variety of activities. This was partly because of the collapse of the diamond industry in 1920, which caused a steep drop in this sector's contribution to Jewish employment, from 29 per cent in 1906 to 8 per cent in 1941. In textiles, too, Jews played an important role in some respects, especially outside Amsterdam—for instance, in laundries and the garment industry, which provided new jobs for some former diamond workers, as well as in textile shops, door-to-door sales, and Twente's textile industry. There were also quite a few Jewish butchers and bakers. The new occupations and economic activities (new niches) that emerged in the years after 1870 also employed a relatively large number of Jews: commercial banks, innovative enterprises, journalism, administrative occupations, and various intellectual professions. Figures from the 1930 census (see Table 7.4) illustrate the situation just before the great economic crisis and the new wave of immigrants from Germany. This table shows not only the relative numbers of Jews, as described here, but also the relatively strong position of Jewish women in the labour market. From this perspective, we might speak of a 'Jewish economy' with its own special features, especially around the turn of the century; in some respects, it was even what is known in the international literature as an ethnic enclave economy. 13

¹² No recent survey of the diamond industry is available, but see H. Heertje, *De diamantbewerkers van Amsterdam* (Amsterdam, 1936); S. Bloemgarten, *Henri Polak: Sociaal democraat* 1868–1943 (The Hague, 1993); M. van der Heijden and W. van Agtmaal, *Henri Polak: Grondlegger van de moderne vakbeweging* 1868–1943 (Amsterdam, 1991); K. Hofmeester, *Jewish Workers and the Labour Movement: A Comparative Study of Amsterdam, London and Paris,* 1870–1914 (Aldershot, 2004); T. van Tijn, 'Geschiedenis van de Amsterdamse diamanthandel and -nijverheid', *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis,* 87 (1974), 16–70 and 160–201; S. Coenen-Snyder, ''As Long as It Sparkles'': The Diamond Industry in Nineteenth Century Amsterdam', *Jewish Social Studies: History, Culture, Society,* NS 22, no. 2 (2017) 38–73; and U. Jansz, 'Women Workers Contested: Socialist, Feminist and Democracy at the National Exhibition of Women's Labour in The Hague, 1898', *Yearbook of Women's History,* 35 (Amsterdam, 2016), 69–85.

Table 7.4	The Jewish labour force in the Dutch economy by sector	, 1930
(as perce	ntage of total)	

	Jewish ('Israelite') labour force		Entire Dutch	labour force	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	
Primary					
Agriculture	0.20	0.04	21.90	14.20	
Fishing and hunting	0.01	_	0.70	0.05	
Total	0.21	0.04	22.60	14.25	
Secondary					
Building industry	1.40	0.10	10.50	0.40	
Clothing and cleaning	7.10	27.70	2.30	10.20	
Diamond industry	9.60	3.60	0.30	0.10	
Foods and allied products	9.50	2.80	8.10	3.00	
Metal industry	2.40	1.00	9.30	1.60	
Textile industry	0.50	0.90	2.40	3.90	
Other	5.50	2.90	11.20	2.90	
Total	36.00	39.00	44.10	22.10	
Tertiary					
Casual workers	1.00	0.02	1.30	0.02	
Commerce	48.80	34.90	12.20	13.60	
Credit and banking	1.70	1.30	1.00	0.60	
Domestic service	0.05	8.00	0.40	30.50	
Education	0.90	3.10	1.60	5.90	
Insurance	0.60	0.60	0.70	0.50	
Religion	0.90	0.30	0.50	0.70	
Transport	4.80	4.50	10.88	4.50	
Total	58.75	52.72	28.58	56.32	
Other					
Occupation unknown	0.003	_	0.01	0.01	
Other trades and liberal					
professions	5.20	8.30	4.80	7.30	
Total	5.203	8.30	4.81	7.31	
Total labour force	36,121	13,702	2,418,237	767,579	

Source: J. P. Kruijt, 'Het jodendom in de Nederlandse samenleving', in H. J. Pos (ed.), Anti-semitisme en jodendom (Arnhem, 1939), 212.

The harrowing poverty in Amsterdam's overcrowded traditional Jewish quarter, which more prosperous Jews left behind them, is well known from numerous reports, which were among the factors leading to the campaign of slum clearance carried out by the Amsterdam authorities, mainly in the twentieth century.¹⁴ We also find vivid

¹⁴ See, in particular, S. Leydesdorff, Wij hebben als mens geleefd: Het joodse proletariaat van Amsterdam 1900–1940 (Amsterdam, 1987).

descriptions of this poverty in the socially engaged work of novelists and dramatists such as Herman Heijermans and the brothers Emanuel and Israel Querido. At the same time, the lively, picturesque, and typically Jewish atmosphere appealed to a few rare individuals. Some who were strongly attached to the traditional Jewish way of life, such as Dr Meijer de Hond, the 'people's rabbi' (PLATE 50), valued and wrote in praise of what Zionists described as the ghetto mentality. Later writings, such as the work of Mozes Heiman Gans and Meyer Sluyser, sometimes suggest a kind of nostalgia for the old Jewish quarter. ¹⁵ Both the primary sources and later studies consistently suggest a degree of filth, decay, and impoverishment that ranked among the most serious social problems in the Netherlands.

Figures on poor relief—with respect to Jews, mainly the Amsterdam figures have been studied—show that the Jewish population was worse off than the rest of the Dutch population. Furthermore, the gap between rich and poor was especially large among the Jews, partly because of a few extremely wealthy individuals. Yet the degree of poverty in the Jewish community was exaggerated for many years, because the figures for different groups were calculated in different ways. 16 For the rest of the population, only those on long-term poor relief were included in the figures, while for the Jews, all sorts of occasional assistance were included, such as medical care, the distribution of 'Passover bread' (matzot), and the donation of tefillin (phylacteries) for the performance of religious duties. That was the only form of support that some people received. Furthermore, many in the Jewish community (such as vendors, street traders, market dealers, and rag-gatherers) were in sore need of occasional trade capital in hard times (whether as a gift or as a loan). Around the mid-nineteenth century, there was a very large group of poor Jews who depended on financial support—perhaps as many as half the Ashkenazi Jews. After that, poverty decreased rapidly, in both absolute and relative terms. The figures for 1899 (not including medical care) show that 4.5 per cent of Jews received poor relief, compared to 1.6 per cent of Dutch Reformed Christians and 2.6 per cent of Catholics. During the economic crisis of the 1930s, poverty and the need for poor relief rose again, and the relative fragility of the 'Jewish economy' was exposed once more.

The documentary evidence is less exact with regard to Jews outside Amsterdam, but it is clear that there too quite a few Jews who had shops or other small businesses or worked as itinerant merchants or market dealers were barely scraping by at best. At the same time, local studies—of Leeuwarden and Groningen, for instance—show relatively strong upward social mobility among Jews.¹⁷ Jewish traders, who were able to

M. H. Gans, Memorboek: Platenatlas van het leven der joden in Nederland van de Middeleeuwen tot 1940 (Baarn, 1971, 6th edn. 1988); M. H. Gans, Het Nederlandse Jodendom: De sfeer waarin wij leefden. Karakter, traditie en sociale omstandigheden van het Nederlandse Jodendom vóór de Tweede Wereldoorlog (Baarn, 1985); M. Sluyser, Voordat ik het vergeet (Amsterdam, 1973).
 Hofmeester, Jewish Workers, 20.

¹⁷ H. Beem, De Joden van Leeuwarden: Geschiedenis van een Joods cultuurcentrum (Assen, 1974); Pim Kooij,

secure a strong position in cattle trading (and thus to some extent in the leather industry), served as middlemen between urban and rural communities thanks to their mobility. This first became a widespread phenomenon in the nineteenth century and contributed to the growing number of Jews in the *mediene*. Later, this intermediary role became less significant, with the expansion of new modes of transport and communication. These changes threatened some people's livelihoods, but in other occupations, and in smaller cities and towns, there were new opportunities to set up a shop or other small business, or to enter various 'white-collar' occupations. The modern occupation of travelling salesman was another option that attracted a fairly large number of Jews.

In *De verdwenen mediene* ('The Vanished *Mediene*'), Hartog Beem offers a compelling sketch of the Jewish trader or salesman, travelling by train, and his predecessor on foot or horseback. He compares the role of the salesman in the big city to his status in the *mediene*:

In the case of the 'soucher' (small tradesman or merchant), again, events took a different course in the *mediene* than in the big city. They had a different kind of contact with the non-Jewish population, since they lived scattered among other groups. Even in provincial areas with relatively large Jewish centres, the communities were too small to develop dialects like that of Amsterdam's Jewish quarter, which was spoken alongside Yiddish and later replaced it. Jews outside Amsterdam used the regional dialect with non-Jews, and even within the Jewish community after Yiddish fell out of use. Small-time souchers in Amsterdam earned their living—or attempted to—by selling their wares in the markets and on the streets. The prototype of the *mediene* soucher was the man who went from farm to farm. ¹⁸

Alongside the initially very large group of poor Jews—who, mainly in their role as street traders, shaped and perpetuated the public image of the Jewish retailer (negatively stereotyped as the small-time huckster)—there were also great economic successes, as mentioned above. Jews were over-represented in some sectors, such as the textile industry, which underwent a major expansion and reorganization, mostly in the late nineteenth century. A remarkable number of Jewish entrepreneurs played an active and initiating role in the establishment and further development of modern textile factories and the manufacture of ready-to-wear clothing. The most prominent family seems to have been the Salomonsons, a number of whom managed to overcome the traditional barriers to the modernization of the sector. Other significant names include Bendien, Van Gelderen, Hedeman, Menko, and Spanjaard (all based in Twente, like Salomonson), Van den Bergh, Elias, and De Heer (in North Brabant), and Hartogs (whose artificial silk factory contributed to the foundations for the major international corporation AKU, later AKZO, and now AKZO-Nobel). Most of these families had

Groningen 1817–1940: Sociale verandering en economische ontwikkeling in een regionaal centrum (Groningen, 1987); S. van der Poel, Joodse stadjers: De Joodse gemeenschap in de stad Groningen 1796–1945 (Assen, 2004).

¹⁸ H. Beem, De verdwenen mediene: Mijmeringen over het vroegere joodse leven in de provincie, 2nd edn. (Amstelveen, 1982), 50.

been involved in textiles for generations, but on a much more modest scale. From their origins as street vendors, they became manufacturers. As in other sectors, certain textile shops and wholesalers were so successful that they grew into major chains of shops and department stores, a new economic trend in those years of expansion. The leaders in this area included the Cohen (Maison de Bonneterie), Gerzon, Goudsmit, and Isaac (De Bijenkorf and later HEMA) families. Various Catholic families (another minority in Dutch society in the process of emancipation) also operated in this sector: Brenninkmeijer (C&A), Lampe, Peek and Cloppenburg (P&C), and Vroom and Dreesmann (V&D). Some of them had come from Germany (Westphalia) as migrants, as had a number of successful Jewish families.

In other sectors, too, there were successful Jewish entrepreneurs with highly innovative activities. In the food and beverage industry, the most prominent examples include the Van den Bergh family, whose margarine factory, along with a company owned by the Catholic Jurgens family, was at the basis of the Unilever Group (PLATE 51), as well as the Hartog and Van Zwanenberg families (both meat producers; the Van Zwanenbergs also founded the pharmaceutical company Organon, which later, like the Hartogs' artificial silk company, became part of AKZO). These families had long been active in the dairy, cattle, and meat trades. Coincidentally, they all had their roots in Oss, where Jewish producers and manufacturers played a leading role. In the leather and shoe industry, several large companies (conglomerates) deserve mention: Chroomlederfabriek 'De Amstel' (owned by the Gompen family), the Lederfabriek Oisterwijk (which later acquired the honorary epithet of Koninklijk, 'Royal'), and the Nederlandse Schoenenunie Bloch en Stibbe. One major name in cigar manufacture was Van Abbe, a family with Jewish origins that had become Catholic—much as the originally Jewish Philips family, who had risen to prominence as light-bulb manufacturers, had become Protestant at an early stage. There were fewer noteworthy Jewish businesspeople in the metal sector, although the names of Enthoven, Van Leer, and Stokvis might be mentioned. Jews were also active in the financial world (banking and stockbroking); examples from this period include Lissa and Kann, Van Nierop, Rosenthal, Teixeira de Mattos, Wertheim, and Mannheimer. Some of these banker families had moved to the Netherlands from Germany, whether in the recent past or longer ago, and they participated in international networks. Yet, on the whole, the role of Jews in this sector in the Netherlands—unlike in some other countries—cannot be described as dominant. What is striking is that Jews were relatively often involved in financial innovations, such as crédit mobilier, and in that sense had their own niche. Lastly, Jews played a remarkably large role in the development of the film and cinema industry in the Netherlands; in particular, Tuschinski was a renowned name. In that sector, too, there was a parallelism with international networks, and the economy and culture became intertwined.19

¹⁹ F. de Jong and J. Thissen, 'Joodse identiteit en ondernemerschap in het Nederlandse bioscoopbedrijf tot

The question arises of whether any general explanation can be given for the major role played by Jewish entrepreneurs in the expansion and innovation in the business sector that brought the Netherlands so much economic growth and upward social mobility across the board. Recent decades have seen new international research into the role of Jewish and other minorities in economic life, a tendency sometimes known as the economic turn in Jewish history. Theories about minorities in general and about the importance of niches and networks, along with a special emphasis on the connection to the social and cultural contexts in which Jews operated (including the public image of Jews and their own self-image), have led to a groundbreaking perspective on the unique economic role of Jews. Often, it is in fact possible to discern a kind of Jewish economic difference, but the economic behaviour of these Jews and Jewish networks does not fundamentally differ from that of other individuals and groups (minorities).²⁰

Hardly any research focusing on this issue has yet been done in the Netherlands, so any observations are strictly provisional.²¹ Yet here, too, there does not seem to be any intrinsic difference in Jewish enterprises or entrepreneurs. Essentially, successful Jewish businesspeople behaved the same way as their non-Jewish counterparts, emphatically seeking the same type of leading social role and cultural participation. The pattern of consumption and deliberate display of personal wealth also showed strong similarities.²² Pre-existing contacts and networks (domestic or international), past experience, and cultural traditions partly determined who benefited from the new economic opportunities, when, where, and how. It is plausible that unlike the established elite, whose response was not very energetic or innovative, Jews, as relative outsiders, were quicker to take the initiative. They sought out new niches, holes in the market. In this context, it is not surprising that a leading role was occasionally played by migrants, an

1940', *Tijdschrift voor Sociale en Economische Geschiedenis*, 7 (2010), 63–87. See also F. de Jong, 'Joodse ondernemers in het Nederlandse film en bioscoopbedrijf tot 1940' (doctoral thesis, Utrecht University, 2013).

- ²⁰ On this subject, see e.g. R. Kobrin and A. Teller (eds.), Purchasing Power: The Economics of Modern Jewish History (Philadelphia, 2015); G. Reuveni and S. Wobick-Segev (eds.), The Economy in Jewish History: New Perspectives on the Interrelationship between Ethnicity and Economic Life (New York, 2011); J. Karp, The Politics of Jewish Commerce: Economic Thought and Emancipation in Europe, 1638–1848 (Cambridge, 2008); D. Penslar, Shylock's Children: Economics and Jewish Identity in Modern Europe (Berkeley, 2001).
- ²¹ The only work providing a general survey of Jewish businesses and businesspeople—Berg et al. (eds.), *Venter*—was published prior to this economic turn. Nonetheless, there are many corporate histories and biographies that can serve as points of departure, such as F. De Jong, *Joodse ondernemers*; F. de Haan, *Een eigen patroon: Geschiedenis van een Joodse familie en haar bedrijven, ca 1800–1964* (Amsterdam, 2002); S. ter Brake and P. van Trigt, *Leerhandelaar, looier, lederfabrikant: Het succes van Joodse ondernemers in de Nederlandse leerindustrie* (1870–1940) (Amsterdam, 2010); and the earlier work by B. W. de Vries, *From Pedlars to Textile Barons: The Economic Development of a Jewish Minority Group in The Netherlands* (Amsterdam, 1989). See also the biographies in R. Fuks-Mansfeld (ed.), *Joden in Nederland in de twintigste eeuw. Een biografisch woordenboek* (Amsterdam, 2007) and in J. Visser, M. Dicke, and A. van der Zouwen (eds.), *Nederlandse ondernemers* 1850–1950 (6 vols., Zutphen, 2009–14).
- ²² H. Schijf and E. van Voolen (eds.), *Gedurfd verzamelen: Van Chagall tot Mondriaan* (Zwolle, 2010), particularly the article by H. Schijf and M. Wagenaar, 'De Joodse bourgeoisie in Amsterdam, 1796–1914', 26–39.

exceptionally energetic and active category. An 'explanation' of this kind is also consistent with the comparable role of Catholic entrepreneurs.

There was great variation in the extent to which Jewish entrepreneurs and their businesses remained oriented towards the Jewish community (or communities) or, alternatively, participated in Dutch society in a socially engaged manner. In practice, there were many intermediate forms. Only in the food industry did Jewishness sometimes seem inherent in the organization of the company: a mostly or exclusively Jewish staff and observance of the Jewish calendar and dietary laws. A few other companies, such as De Bijenkorf and Hollandia Kattenburg, are reputed to have had relatively large numbers of Jewish employees, but there is usually little evidence of that. In such cases, taking Friday evening and Saturday off work, whether occasionally or systematically, was rarely if ever attested and would have interfered with the companies' growth. Jewish cinema owners, for instance, focused entirely and without hesitation on the general Dutch public, showing no outwardly Jewish characteristics. But at the same time, most of them remained in direct contact with the Jewish community, in part by hosting social activities in their cinemas for Jewish children on Jewish holidays—events that incidentally also helped to strengthen ties with customers.

Many Jewish businesspeople were highly integrated and oriented towards the local economic and social elites and the middle classes. They placed no importance on their own Jewish background, although it was generally public knowledge. The relevance of that background in social situations varied greatly. Others, in contrast, were very attached to their Jewishness; this might express itself in a greater or lesser role in the local Jewish community, or in a degree of social isolation. But the latter was not necessarily the case. A leading role in the Jewish community could also go together with active participation in local social life and/or a role as a formal or informal representative of the Jews. Conversely, forms of antisemitism were present almost everywhere, especially in economic and labour conflicts—though in widely varying degrees. The scale was usually small, but there were also rare outbursts of fierce antisemitism against Jewish businesspeople, usually in response to scandals—in the cases of Pincoffs, Mannheimer, and Van Zwanenberg, for instance.

The importance of consumption brings us back to the middle classes, who—regardless of all the consumption, conspicuous or otherwise, by the ultra-wealthy elite—are the ones who actually make mass production profitable. Between the above-mentioned extremes of poverty and wealth, there was a dynamic spectrum of growing middle classes of diverse kinds: skilled workers, small and medium-sized business owners, members of the liberal professions, and a new group of office workers in the private and public sectors, which included a relatively large number of Jews. In this area, again, the exact status and role of Jews was determined by the particular circumstances, which differed by sector, region, and city.

The emerging middle classes, to which a steadily increasing proportion of Jews

belonged, included a striking number of university graduates. It seems reasonable to assume that the Jewish tradition of 'lernen' (study) played a role, direct or indirect, in their strong representation in this group. Yet it was for the most part a new turn of events (a new niche) that presented new opportunities for individual development. In 1930, 2.6 per cent of university graduates regarded themselves as Jewish, while the proportion of Jews in the total population over the age of 20 was 1.7 per cent. Of the very few women with an academic degree, a full 3.8 per cent were Jewish, a reflection of the importance attached to schooling and education for girls and women in Jewish circles.²³ Adjustment of the figures to correct for the absence of most highly educated Catholic priests does not change this general picture—especially not if one keeps in mind that rabbinical studies—which presented opportunities to smart religious Jewish boys from poorer backgrounds—often did not involve a complete university education. When they did, the field was usually classical languages. The proportion of Jews also varied by subject. There was a relatively high number of Jews among dentists (7.4 per cent), economists (7.0 per cent; the field was then known as handelswetenschappen, commercial studies), physicians (3.8 per cent), and law graduates (3.2 per cent). Jews were under-represented in theology (an almost completely Christian field), veterinary medicine, agriculture, and engineering. In the humanities, mathematics, and natural sciences, only marginal differences were visible.

If we look at leading figures in fields requiring a university education, the Jewish physicians and legal practitioners stand out most clearly. A relatively large number of Jews were in the main legal professions (the bar, the judiciary, legislation, and scholarship), doing work that could not be regarded as especially Jewish in content. On the contrary, they tended to adapt to the prevailing standards of the sector, even if they were also keenly aware of their Jewish background and sometimes adopted traditional Jewish ways of life or served in Jewish organizations. A few individuals are particularly noteworthy, such as the various members of the Asser family (which had become Christian)—above all, the 1911 Nobel Peace Prize laureate Tobias Michel Carel Asser—and the consciously Jewish Jacques Oppenheim, Eduard Maurits Meijers, and Lodewijk Ernst Visser.²⁴

The medical profession was strictly regulated in the Netherlands and formed a tight-knit social group. Physicians were united by a view of the profession centred on a version of the Hippocratic Oath and the related code of medical ethics; from this perspective, medicine was no ordinary occupation but a calling. There had traditionally been a relatively large number of Jewish physicians; in 1940, 9 per cent of Dutch medical

²³ Figures from *Statistiek van Nederland: Volkstelling 31 December 1930. Deel IX* (The Hague, 1934), 166–7, and M. Rietveld-van Wingerden and N. Bakker, 'Education and the Emancipation of Jewish Girls in the Nineteenth Century: The Case of the Netherlands', *History of Education Quarterly*, 44/2 (2004), 202–21.

²⁴ For a discussion of this topic from the 1930s, see B. M. Telders, 'De Joodse geest en het recht', in H. J. Pos (ed.), *Antisemitisme en Jodendom* (Arnhem, 1939), 107–29.

doctors were Jewish.²⁵ Almost all of them were highly integrated into the Dutch medical profession. A number of them played leading roles in medical organizations, in both governance and the actual medical work. For example, Barend Joseph Stokvis was appointed president of the Nederlandsche Maatschappij tot Bevordering der Geneeskunst (Dutch Society for the Promotion of Medicine) as early as 1870. In 1877 Stokvis became a professor in Amsterdam. He was no exception in this regard. Between 1918 and 1940, there were twelve Jewish professors of medicine, six of whom were in Amsterdam. They included the remarkable figure of Ernst Laqueur, from Germany, who was not only a physician and a scientist but also an entrepreneur. As the co-founder of the Organon company in 1923, he laid the scientific groundwork for the large-scale manufacturing of insulin and other hormone preparations ('the Pill'). A surprising number of Jewish physicians worked in the fields of social medicine and public health, undoubtedly influenced by the dire poverty they had witnessed in Amsterdam's Jewish quarter, and perhaps also by Jewish conceptions of assistance to the poor and medical ethics. Louis Heijermans, the celebrated director of Amsterdam's municipal health authority, stood in the tradition of 'hygienists' that went back to the mid-nineteenth century. Numerous Jewish physicians, like their counterparts in the legal world, also played prominent roles in Jewish life.

The relative importance attached to girls' education in Jewish circles and the high proportion of Jewish women among university graduates raise the question of Jewish women's role and status. The figures in Table 7.4 clearly illustrate the relatively high level of labour participation among Jewish women, compared to non-Jewish women. Again, it is striking that characteristics rooted in Jewish tradition remained in evidence alongside undeniable Jewish participation in new developments. Traditionally, the role of the woman in Jewish life, which was perceived as very important, revolved around her role as a mother and housewife, and therefore as the main protector of the Jewish way of life. This ideal was highly compatible with the traditional middle-class views of women that were prevalent in the Netherlands in this period. In practice, however, the roles of Jewish women were much more diverse. In the lower social strata, Jewish or otherwise, women's paid work outside the home was simply an indispensable part of the family's income. Many small shops and businesses absolutely depended on women's participation. As standards of living rose, women continued to do this type of work, which in some cases became a stepping stone to new activities. In Jewish circles and beyond, Jewish women played diverse roles in the expanding and upwardly mobile middle classes. They began to organize as a group, for instance through the establishment of the Joodsche Vrouwenraad in Nederland (Jewish Women's Council in the Netherlands) in 1923, with Caroline Wijsenbeek-Franken as president. The council's

²⁵ Calculated on the basis of the mandatory registration imposed by the occupying power in 1941. See H. van den Ende, 'Vergeet nooit dat je arts bent': Joodse artsen in Nederland 1940–1945 (Amsterdam, 2015). The passage on Jewish physicians is based almost entirely on the first chapter of that doctoral thesis.

aim was to 'foster and strengthen the consciousness of Jewish solidarity among women'. At its height, it had more than 2,000 members.²⁶

The labour movement is a good example of Jewish women's participation in social causes. While there were certainly Jewish men among the leaders in the formation of the Dutch labour movement, Jewish women were also in the forefront. Roosje Vos, Sani Prijes, and Alida de Jong, who had working-class Jewish backgrounds, became active members of the seamstresses' trade union and gradually worked their way from there into leading positions in the country's social democratic labour movement.

Even the simple act of taking on such public roles was a break with Jewish tradition and especially its religious element. Participation in organized labour gave Jews the chance to explore new paths, widen their horizons, and build up independent lives in Dutch society, even outside the labour movement. But they certainly did not sever their ties to Jewish life. Through family connections, and in promoting collective Jewish interests, they remained attentive to the special characteristics of the Jewish population. In her novels, Sani Prijes created a new form of Jewish life adapted to modern times, in which politically active women worked shoulder to shoulder with socialists and rabbis. The Roosjessnijdsters- en Snijdersvereeniging (Rose-Cutters' Union) was led almost entirely by women, particularly the sisters Sophie and Betje Lazarus, because in practice, rose-cutting (a variety of diamond cutting) was generally women's work. In 1901 this union lost its independent status when the ANDB (the general diamond workers' trade union) was transformed from a federation into a centrally controlled organization.²⁷

For middle-class Jewish women one route to a more public role was charity work, but, more strikingly, Jewish women were also prominent in the feminist movement. The best-known examples are Aletta Jacobs (PLATE 52), Rosa Manus (PLATE 53), and Anna Polak. Their Jewish backgrounds played little or no part in their activities. In her public appearances and her memoirs, Aletta Jacobs never once mentioned her Jewish origins. The feminist activities of these Jewish women can, from one perspective, be seen as an exploration of the limits of their lives as members of a slowly integrating minority. Once they had moved beyond those limits, they often felt ambivalent about

²⁶ M. K. Blommaard, 'Joden, Vrouwen of Zionisten? Identiteitsvorming van de Joodse Vrouwenraad in Nederland 1923–1940' (MA thesis, Leiden University; available at https://openaccess.leidenuniv.nl); C. Brasz, 'Dutch Jews and German Immigrants, Backgrounds of an Uneasy Partnership in Dutch Judaism', in J. Frishman, D. J. Wertheim, I. de Haan, and J. Cahen (eds.), *Borders and Boundaries in and around Dutch Jewish History* (Amsterdam, 2011), 125–42.

²⁷ K. Hofmeester, 'Roosje Vos, Sani Prijes, Alida de Jong and the Others: Jewish Women Workers and the Labour Movement as a Vehicle on the Road to Modernity', in Frishman and Berg (eds.), *Cultural Maelstrom*, 155–67; U. Jansz, *De roosjessnijdsters- en snijdervereniging* 1896–1902: *Een bond bestuurd door Vrouwen* https://www.vakbondshistorie.nl/dossiers/de-roosjessnijdsters-en-snijdersvereniging-1896-1902/, https://onvoltooidverleden.nl/index.php?id=481. On Betje Lazarus see https://www.biografischportaal.nl/persoon/60240707.

their Jewishness and, in some stages of their lives, even explicitly rejected it or else remained silent about it, because the ideals that drove them were universal. Yet in fact they knew perfectly well that they were part of a world in which Jews were not yet fully accepted and that their Jewish background deeply influenced their lives in many ways. Even the feminist movement was not free of antisemitism, both conscious and unconscious. In that context, keeping silent could be a practical choice. It has been hypothesized that the tendency of these thoroughly secular women to take radical feminist positions is related to their earlier emphatic rejection of Jewish religion and the related customs.²⁸

In summary, Jews participated fully in the economic and social dynamics of Dutch society, in which tradition and modernity were connected in many different ways. From one perspective, Jews could be seen as a separate group (or subgroup), to which distinctive characteristics could be attributed. At the same time, the degree of internal differentiation is striking. Furthermore, the group was, first and foremost, part of Dutch society and identical to the mainstream in many respects.

Religious Life, Cultures and Subcultures, and Pillarization Phenomena

In the period 1870–1940, the religious and synagogal lives of Dutch Jews were marked, every bit as much their economic and social activities, by growing differentiation. The 'long nineteenth century' is usually described as the heyday of secularization, characterized by the loss of religious faith, disaffiliation from religious communities, and the decreasing significance of religion in social and personal life. That same century, however, also witnessed a process of continued confessionalization and a remarkable deepening of religious life for many people.²⁹ This was just as true among Jews as in Catholic and Protestant circles. The 'nationalization' of Jewish synagogal life earlier in the century had certainly been accompanied by diverse forms of acculturation, and religious observance and religious affiliation were on the wane. Yet that formed no obstacle to the intensification of religious experience for other people. Furthermore, the firm embedding of the Jewish denominations in the national framework was fully compatible with a deeper sense of connection, on religious or other grounds, to inter-

²⁸ S. L. Tanenbaum, 'Jewish Women, Philanthropy, and Modernization: The Changing Role of Jewish Women in Modern Europe, 1850–1939', in Frishman and Berg (eds.), *Cultural Maelstrom*, 139–53; M. Schoonheim, 'Stemming the Current: Dutch Jewish Women and the First Feminist Movement', ibid. 169–82; S. Leydesdorff, 'Dutch Jewish Women: Integration and Modernity', ibid. 183–94; M. Bosch, *Een onwrikbaar geloof in rechtvaardigheid: Aletta Jacobs 1854–1929* (Amsterdam, 2005); M. Everard, 'Rosa Manus: The Genealogy of a Dutch Feminist', in M. Everard and F. de Haan (eds.), *Rosa Manus* (1881–1942): *The International Life and Legacy of a Jewish Dutch Feminist* (Leiden, 2017), 25–58, esp. 57–8.

²⁹ O. Blaschke, 'Das 19. Jahrhundert: Ein Zweites Konfessionelles Zeitalter?', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, 26 (2000), 38–75.

national Jewry. Even Zionism, a new phenomenon in this period, which was at first largely separate from religion, had a religious offshoot.

The degree to which these developments can be captured in figures is limited. Sometimes the figures give a misleading impression; even those Jews who were disconnected from religion in practice usually remained official members of one of the two denominations and observed certain central Jewish customs and traditions. For example, in 1932, 1933, and 1934, the proportion of newborn sons of Jewish mothers who were circumcised was 96, 92, and 90 per cent respectively. Those who were not circumcised were mostly the children of mixed marriages. Non-religious Jews offered hygienic arguments as a more or less apologetic reason for circumcising their sons, or claimed to have done it for the sake of the grandparents. Similarly, more than 90 per cent of marriages in the Netherlands in 1914 and 1915 between two partners both registered as 'Israelites' involved a synagogue ceremony. The figure in Catholic circles was comparable, but among Protestants it was only slightly more than 30 per cent. There was undoubtedly a slight downward trend over the years, but figures from Amsterdam show that from 1901 to 1933 there was at most a decline from 97.3 to 91.9 per cent.³⁰ A similar tendency to maintain the connection with Judaism can be seen in the case of burial. When Dutch Jews died, they were almost always interred in Jewish cemeteries. Most Ashkenazi Jews from the middle classes and the elite in Amsterdam were buried in Muiderberg and Diemen, while the less prosperous, who formed the large majority, were buried in Zeeburg.31

All this shows the lasting influence of Jewish religious and other traditions. Although many people did not strictly observe the sabbath, major Jewish holidays were celebrated not only in Orthodox circles, but much more widely. Many boys who, like their parents, rarely set foot in the synagogue nevertheless had barmitzvah ceremonies there and were occasionally asked to complete a *minyan* (quorum for prayer); it did gradually become more difficult, especially in smaller Jewish communities, to assemble the ten people required. Celebrating or 'keeping' the Friday evening ritual often remained a family custom, sometimes without any direct religious connotation. Culinary traditions rooted in dietary laws remained widely observed, even among secularizing Jews; examples include the avoidance of pork and a fondness for chicken soup. Kosher shops could be found all over the Netherlands and even had non-Jewish customers.

Despite the rapid process of secularization, many synagogues were replaced by larger and more attractive buildings. This went on until well into the twentieth century, especially in the *mediene*, for example in Enschede, Groningen, Nijmegen, Utrecht, and Zwolle. In Amsterdam, despite the closure of several synagogues in the old Jewish

³⁰ The figures are taken from Boekman, *Demografie van de Joden*.

³¹ B. Wallet, with L. van Huit-Schimmel and P. van Trigt, *Zeeburg: Geschiedenis van een joodse begraafplaats* 1714–2014 (Hilversum, 2014).

neighbourhood, the total number actually increased as a result of Jews moving to the newly built districts, thus adding to the Jewish population there. In 1931 the city had twenty-four in all. New synagogues were usually designed in the dominant styles of the time. In a few cases (Enschede (PLATE 55) and Groningen), a distinctly Orientalist architectural style was used. In contrast to other major European cities such as Berlin, Paris, and London, no large, conspicuous new synagogue was erected in Amsterdam. No need was felt for that type of architectural expression of emancipation, given that the Portuguese and Great Ashkenazi Synagogues were already major presences in the cityscape. The fact that all the synagogues counted together did not have nearly enough space for everyone registered as Jewish, especially in Amsterdam, did not lead to difficulties, because on popular religious holidays extra space was rented, as noted above. This phenomenon was indicative of both the process of secularization and the continuing connection felt by many people.

Official religious life in the NIK and the PIK was highly Orthodox in nature. The forms it took were adapted, more and more over time, to the national Dutch context. For example, the organization of the two denominations was modelled on that of the Protestant churches in the Netherlands. In fact, the synagogue was often referred to as a church (kerk)—another sign of the 'nationalization' of Jewish religious organization. After initial resistance in the early nineteenth century this had become generally accepted. Of course, the use of Hebrew in the synagogue remained a clear difference from Christian liturgies. In the first half of the century, Yiddish and Portuguese were gradually removed from the announcements and the sermons; only in the Sephardi service did a small vestige of the old language (Portuguese) remain in use even after 1870. This was linked to the disappearance of those same languages in daily interaction in the Dutch Jewish community. This adaptation to the dominant surrounding language sometimes went so far that Jews from the mediene spoke only their regional dialect and had difficulty understanding each other at first. They spoke more and more standard Dutch, however. Meanwhile, all sorts of Yiddish (and, to a lesser extent, Portuguese Jewish) words survived in Dutch, sometimes in an altered form.³³

A new religious organizational structure for the Jewish community, which built on earlier developments, had been introduced in 1870 under pressure from the national authorities, as a practical implementation of the separation of church and state called for by the Constitution of 1848.³⁴ From that time on, the NIK and the PIK were independent organizations operating in parallel and organized along roughly the same lines. The PIK attempted to honour and perpetuate the Sephardi tradition, but 'the Portuguese' could no longer muster the energy and vitality of yore. Yet the Portuguese syna-

³² E. van Voolen and P. Meijer (with a contribution by Hans van Agt; photographs by Willy Lindwer), Synagogen in Nederland (Zutphen, 2006), and S. Coenen-Snyder, Building a Public Judaism: Synagogues and Jewish Identity in Nineteenth-Century Europe (Cambridge, Mass., 2012).

³³ H. Heestermans and D. Simons, *Mokums Woordenboek* (Amsterdam, 2014).

³⁴ For the developments that preceded this reorganization, see also Ch. 6 above.

gogues in Amsterdam and The Hague still vividly attested to their glorious heyday in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and to the enduring presence of the Sephardi Jews. And there were traces of advanced cultural life—for instance, around the library of the Ets Haim seminary, which increased in importance partly thanks to the donation of a valuable book collection by the librarian David de Montezinos (1882–1916). The Portuguese Jewish community became focused on historical memory, on its illustrious past, as chronicled by the librarian Jacob Samuel da Silva Rosa (1886–1943) and others. In social life, the distinction between the Sephardi (or Portuguese) and Ashkenazi (or *Hoogduits*, 'High German') communities gradually dwindled in significance, as illustrated by the many marriages in this period that crossed the once-sharp boundaries between the two 'Jewish Nations'. The upper social strata in the Portuguese community remained proud of their Sephardi origins (the 'myth of Sephardi superiority'), ³⁵ although in a less pronounced way than before. In the lower social strata, their self-importance was ridiculed.

In certain respects, the Ashkenazi community was flourishing and surpassing the Sephardim even further. The NIK was headed by a Central Committee consisting of representatives of the main synagogues of twelve, or later thirteen, regions, which roughly corresponded to the Dutch provinces (South Holland had two regions, and Amsterdam became a separate region in 1936). The Permanent Committee, responsible for day-to-day management, was made up of three Amsterdam members of the Central Committee. From 1917 onwards the Permanent Committee had five members, one of whom could come from outside Amsterdam. The new structure formed in 1870 essentially maintained the system of matriculated membership, which was rooted in the class relationships of the ancien régime—even though this system had been widely criticized in the nineteenth century, because it was incompatible with the principle of equality, and was in fact a form of institutionalized inequality—which over time developed into a gap between rich and poor. The matriculated members paid more, were eligible for positions on the synagogue board, received priority in religious ceremonies, and had their own permanent seats in the synagogue. Perhaps most importantly, in subjective terms, they had the right to be buried in the Muiderberg and Overveen cemeteries. The outcome of the discussions leading up to the arrangement of 1870 was that every Jewish congregation was permitted to decide for itself whether this system would be maintained in practice. This led to its abolition in a number of Jewish communities—in Leeuwarden in 1874, for instance, and in The Hague and Rotterdam in the early twentieth century. Efforts to do the same thing in Amsterdam in the 1920s and 1930s led to heated debate and were ultimately unsuccessful.³⁶

There was no Chief Rabbinate for the entire country at any time in this period. A

³⁵ For Sephardi Jews in general and the 'myth of Sephardi superiority' in particular, see J. Cohen, *De onont-koombare afkomst van Eli d'Oliveira: Een Portugees-Joodse familiegeschiedenis* (Amsterdam, 2015).

³⁶ Wallet, Zeeburg, ch. 4, On the matriculated members, see Ch. 6 above.

national Assembly of Chief Rabbis was organized in 1900, however. Its early meetings were not as representative as they might have been, because Dr Joseph Hirsch Dünner, the chief rabbi of North Holland (essentially Amsterdam, where more than half of Dutch Jews lived), did not attend. He considered it beneath his dignity to meet with many of his former students on equal terms. His successor, Abraham Samson Onderwijzer, who was not formally appointed until 1917, did join the group and, as the chief rabbi of North Holland, naturally became its de facto leader. This assembly did not have any official powers, but its informal influence substantially increased as time went on, partly because board members of Jewish communities occasionally presented halakhic questions to the group.

Each region had a main synagogue and a chief rabbi and was composed of a number of Jewish congregations. Most congregations extended over a number of civil communities, because many towns and villages had very few Jews among their residents. These Jewish congregations each had a high degree of autonomy—partly as a counterweight to prevent Amsterdam's influence from becoming too dominant. The members of the synagogue board and synagogue council, in consulation with the rabbi, formed the heart of any local Jewish religious community.

Depending on circumstances and personal factors, the local cantor, teacher of religion, or other figures might play central roles as well. In the very small communities that had no rabbi of their own, it was not unusual for one person, often the teacher of religion, to play all these roles at once, becoming the hub of the local Jewish community. This high degree of local autonomy was tempered somewhat in 1917, when religious denominations were officially converted from associations of congregations to associations of individual members. But in daily practice, which was marked not only by fellowship and cooperation but also by a series of conflicts large and small, this change made no real difference.

The power structures of the two denominations involved the complex interaction of the Orthodox rabbis with the cultured and even secularized board members (parnasim) from the upper middle class. For many years after 1870, two individuals personified this unlikely alliance of community leaders: Abraham Carel Wertheim (1832–97; PLATE 46), board president of the Nederlands-Israëlitische Hoofdsynagoge in Amsterdam (in the North Holland region), and Joseph Hirsch Dünner (1833–1911), the chief rabbi of North Holland, appointed in 1874. Wertheim exemplified the highly secularized Jew, integrated into Dutch society. A wealthy banker, he played a leading

³⁷ B. Wallet, "Vorming, beschaving en heil": Joodse godsdienstonderwijzers en de religiegeschiedenis van joods Nederland, 1815–1980', *Documentatieblad voor de Nederlandse Kerkgeschiedenis na 1800*, 36 (2013), 66–91; B. Wallet, "Een veelzijdig ontwikkeld en maatschappelijk beschaafd mensch": De Israëlitische godsdienstonderwijzer in de lange negentiende eeuw', in J. Exalto and G. van Klinken (eds.), *De protestantse onderwijzer: Geschiedenis van een dienstbaar beroep 1800–1920 (= Jaarboek voor de Geschiedenis van het Nederlands Protestantisme na 1800*, 23) (2015), 147–64.

role in Amsterdam's financial world and participated in many social and cultural activities in the city and throughout the country. Politically, he was a prominent liberal (in the classical sense). Despite some opposition in the political field, he managed to become a member of the Dutch Senate (Eerste Kamer). The Jewish religion seems to have played hardly any role in his personal life. In a humorous rhyme written for a family celebration of St Nicholas's Day and later widely disseminated, his wife Rosalie (PLATE 54) even teased him about his leadership role in his Jewish denomination in the light of his fondness for oysters, a non-kosher food.³⁸

His high degree of integration into Dutch society did not imply any estrangement from his Jewish origins. On the contrary, he felt that he had a share of responsibility for his many fellow Jews in need in Amsterdam and elsewhere. That explains his willingness to serve as a leading religious administrator, thus taking his place in a long tradition of service among affluent and notable Jews. On the synagogue boards he met people with similar lives and views and very different levels of religiosity and attachment to Jewish tradition. On this spectrum, Wertheim, who was also a Freemason, was close to one extreme. Other synagogue board members undoubtedly had stronger religious feelings. In social terms, they formed a very homogeneous group. As prominent and prosperous members of the middle class, the parnasim gave the Jewish denominations their distinctive character: bourgeois, class-conscious, and paternalistic. From this perspective, they believed that their denomination—and, in particular, the mass of devout believers—was best served by the perpetuation of Orthodoxy. To them, this was the only conceivable way to preserve the unity of the Jewish community. As Wertheim put it: 'Judaism must be Orthodox or it must not be.'39 That was also the basis of their mariage de raison, as Hans Daalder has described it, 40 with the rabbis, who saw the preservation of Orthodoxy and the attendant way of life as among their most important tasks. This attitude, which entailed a degree of rigidity—although there were great differences from place to place, depending on the personalities involved—is generally seen as an additional factor in the alienation of many working-class Jews from the Jewish religion. This alienation became strongest as economic expansion reduced poverty and the modern labour movement offered an alternative orientation.

Dünner, born in Kraków in 1833, had been invited to the Netherlands in 1862 to breathe new life into the rabbinical training programme. He had received his Talmud education in Galicia (eastern Europe) and then studied in Bonn. In Germany he had become strongly oriented towards the German variety of Orthodox Judaism. As the rector of the Nederlands Israëlitisch Seminarium (Dutch Israelite Seminary) from 1865 onwards, he had the opportunity to train a large number of Dutch rabbis, gradually

³⁸ A. S. Rijxman, A. C. Wertheim 1832–1897: Een bijdrage tot zijn levensgeschiedenis (Amsterdam, 1961).

³⁹ Quoted ibid. 224.

⁴⁰ H. Daalder, 'Joden in verzuilend Nederland', in id., *Politiek en Historie: Opstellen over Nederlandse politiek en vergelijkende politieke wetenschap* (Amsterdam, 1990), 96–112: 104.

eliminating the need to recruit rabbis for Dutch congregations in Germany. In 1874 he was also appointed to the position, vacant since 1838, of chief rabbi of the North Holland region (that is, Amsterdam). In view of the struggle over the nature of religious Judaism in the preceding years, this appointment was not uncontroversial. Some reformist Jews had serious reservations. As chief rabbi, Dünner remained as energetic as ever, and he left a profound mark on Jewish religious experience in the Netherlands. His influence remained palpable decades after his death in 1911. His students, who referred to him as the Great Master, admired him deeply. Dünner supported the authority of the *parnasim* in administrative matters. In the religious sphere, he hoped for their support for his moderate Orthodox line. He strove for the thorough renewal of Orthodoxy by stripping it of some traditional elements—especially mystical ones.⁴¹

Early in this period many Jews were highly attached to their traditions, even if they could not follow synagogue services because Hebrew was used. Furthermore, the synagogue had always been a meeting place where all sorts of discussion took place. This had always made Jewish life in the synagogue a unique experience: colourful, vibrant, and chaotic. In fact, the Dutch word *jodenkerk* ('Jewish church' or synagogue) had come into general idiomatic use as a disparaging term for a cacophony in which everyone speaks or shouts at once—a usage based on actual observation. Dünner, who knew little about Amsterdam working-class life, waged a successful campaign against these aspects of Dutch Judaism, and his students followed his example. Life in the synagogue became more orderly and dignified. The Jewish middle classes welcomed this emphasis on decorum, which involved further adaptations to Dutch bourgeois society. Many of those adaptations went almost unnoticed, though they were not painless for those who were devoted to the old forms and customs and practised them. In 1930, for instance—during Onderwijzer's tenure as chief rabbi—the Amsterdam custom of the sjkoome, or early service, was abolished. This was a kabbalist tradition commemorating the destruction of the Temple. It was not the first time that Dünner had excised certain mystical traditions from the prayer-book without drawing it to general attention. In the seminary, the history of the siddur (prayer-book) was not taught.42

At the rabbinical seminary Dünner placed the emphasis—in the spirit of his German background—on a combination of Orthodox Jewish training and a challenging academic education focused in large part on classical studies. One very significant step

⁴¹ J. Meijer, *Rector en raw: De levensgeschiedenis van Dr. J. H. Dünner 1833–1911* (Heemstede, 1984) is too one-sided. See also B. Wallet, "The Great Eagle, the Pride of Jacob": Joseph Hirsch Dünner in Dutch Jewish Memory Culture', and E. Gans, 'Images of "The Raw" through the Lens of an Involved Historian: Jaap Meijers's Depiction of Rabbi Joseph Hirsch Dünner', both in Y. Kaplan and D. Michman (eds.), *The Religious Cultures of Dutch Jews* (Leiden, 2017), 297–315 and 316–26. For Dünner and the background to his appointment as rector, see also Ch. 6 above.

⁴² J. Meijer, *Mazzeltov in Mineur: Bij het jubileum der NIHS 1635–1985*; *Balans der Ballingschap*, Bijdrage tot de geschiedenis der Joden in Nederland, 7 (Heemstede, 1985).

was his decision to approach the rabbinical tradition (although not the Hebrew Bible) from a historical-critical perspective consistent with the recent scholarly developments of his day. This furnished the generations of rabbis trained in his programme with a solid intellectual foundation. Some even attained an impressive level of scholarship, in keeping with both the tradition of 'lernen' and the ambition to participate in the intellectual and cultural developments of their day. Sometimes that distanced them somewhat from Jews who lived by the old traditions, who tended to be poorer and less educated. In general, the ambitions of the Dutch rabbis seem to have been akin to those of Samson Raphael Hirsch (1808–88) in Germany: a conception of Judaism that was Orthodox in the religious sense, combined with the aim of integration into national (in this case, Dutch) culture. From that perspective, it is understandable that most of these rabbis opposed the Zionist movement that arose around 1900. Surprisingly, Dünner himself became a supporter of Zionism, a fact that his students often tried to play down.⁴³

Those who were attached to the old traditions and saw in them the ideal expression of their religious devotion had fewer opportunities to practise their religion as they conceived it at the synagogue, although that was much more true in some places than in others. Certain rabbis and teachers of religion—including some from very humble backgrounds, who lived in poverty themselves—did find a place for that variety of religious devotion in their daily work. Such devotion could also be experienced intensely, albeit in a modified, regulated form, in religious associations, both long-established and new. 'Lernen' took place in most kehilot. The opening of a new 'house of learning', a masterpiece of modern steel construction, in Amsterdam's Rapenburgerstraat in 1885, was a high point in the continuation of the Orthodox Jewish tradition. The fact that Amsterdam had around eighty kosher businesses in 1938—thirty-two butchers' shops, eleven poulterers' shops, eighteen bakeries, six pastry shops, and a few restaurants and pensions⁴⁴—demonstrates not only a taste for typically Jewish delicacies such as the gemberbolus, a sweet roll filled with candied ginger, the broodje halfom, a roll with salted meat and ox liver, and pickled gherkins—but also an attachment to tradition. For Jews outside Amsterdam, there was Ritueel Eten Op Reis ('Ritual Eating while Travelling'), a list of addresses for rabbi-inspected kosher food.

Meijer de Hond, mentioned above, whose opposition to the rationalism of Dünner and the *parnasim* prevented him from ever becoming part of the Jewish establishment, brought about a revival of these traditional Jewish values. A gifted speaker and writer of nostalgic pieces, collected under the title of *Kiekjes* ('snapshots'), he struck a tone that won him a devoted following, especially among poorer Jews. ⁴⁵ Signs of this tendency included the religious association Touroh Our, the periodical *Libanon*, and the youth

 ⁴³ C. Brasz, 'Dutch Jewry and its Undesired German Rabbinate', Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook, 57 (2012),
 73–86; Wallet, "The Great Eagle".

⁴⁵ J. Meijer (ed.), Dr. Meijer de Hond 1882–1942: Bloemlezing uit zijn werk (Amsterdam, 1951).

association Jong Betsalel with its successful theatre ensemble of the same name. As a socially engaged 'rebbe', he served as a counterpoise to the strong modernizing currents of Orthodoxy and of apostasy or religious indifference among the Jewish proletariat, who were drawn to socialism.

De Hond's insistence on his own path of religious devotion made waves, although he could not match the social milestones achieved in politics and labour relations. His most lasting contribution may be his establishment of and profound commitment to De Joodsche Invalide, a care home for the chronically ill that had many elderly residents. Despite De Hond's image as a traditionalist, this initiative was in many ways very modern.

The above-mentioned settlement of a limited number of east European Jews, who brought their eastern Yiddish traditions with them, underscored just how diluted the old traditions had become in the Netherlands. Many of these Jews (often known by the German name of *Ostjuden* or the Dutch equivalent, *Oostjoden*) spoke Yiddish to one another and kept all sorts of religious and cultural practices alive. It should be added that they were not a homogeneous group but formed 'partly overlapping subcultures side by side'. 46 Nor were they all Orthodox. There were also socialists, communists, and Zionists among them (including some radicals). In almost every case, however, they remained emphatically Jewish in lifestyle. Besides founding two synagogues of their own in Amsterdam (Kehilat Jaakow and Nidchei Jisraël Jechaneis), they established the left-wing Oost-Joodsche Arbeiders Cultuurkring Sch. Anski (Eastern Jewish Workers' Cultural Circle) in 1921 and the bourgeois Orthodox Oost-Joodsch Verbond (Eastern Jewish League) in 1931, and they revived the Yiddish language, to some degree, in theatre and literature. This gave an extra impetus to interest in Jewish culture and history, which had already been on the rise among a broad group.⁴⁷

This growing interest found expression in various ways, such as the establishment of the Genootschap voor Joodsche Wetenschap (Society for Jewish Studies, 1919) and the Joods Historisch Museum (Jewish Historical Museum, 1932), as well as the publication of the weekly *De Vrijdagavond* ('The Friday Evening', 1924–32). One rich source of information, alongside the aforementioned Ets Haim Library, was the Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana, based on the superb collection of Leeser Rosenthal (1794–1868). Rosenthal, a rabbi in Hannover, had intended to donate his collection to the German National Library in Berlin. Bismarck put a stop to that plan, however. His children—one of whom, George, was a banker in Amsterdam—then donated the collection to the city in 1880. Under the librarians Meyer Marcus Roest, Jeremias Meijer Hillesum, and Louis Hirschel, this library—which became a division of the Amsterdam University

⁴⁶ Tammes (ed.), *Oostjoodse Passanten*. Quoted in K. Hofmeester, 'De immigratie van Oost-Europese joden in Amsterdam: omvang, aard en vestiging', in Tammes (ed.), *Oostjoodse Passanten*, 51–71: 71.

⁴⁷ M. Anstadt and F. Hiegentlich, *De Oost-Joodse Cultuur Vereniging Sch. An-ski 1921–1979* (Amsterdam, 1979); L. Fuks, 'Oost-joden in Nederland tussen de beide wereldoorlogen', *StR* II (1977), 198–215.

Library—grew into a collection of Judaica and Hebraica of major international significance. 48

The situation in the NIK—an Orthodoxy that was uniform in its doctrines, with a strong orientation towards the Dutch nation and citizenship, and large groups of members who were registered but not very active—was especially striking in contrast with the state of affairs in Germany, where Reformjudentum (Reform Judaism) was flourishing. Within the emerging framework of the Einheitsgemeinde, Orthodox and Liberal religious movements could operate side by side. Germany pointed the way for Dutch Jewry in many respects, but not in this one. On the contrary, religious Liberal Judaism in the Netherlands is noteworthy for its late development and the relatively small numbers of people involved in it. For many years, the initiators—who felt that religious life in the NIK had become too rigid and ossified, but did feel the need for Jewish religious life of a modern (Reform or Liberal) variety—were lacking in numbers and community influence. Most such individuals were members of the Jewish bourgeoisie, which on the whole was not very interested in alternative outlets for religious inspiration, contented itself with changes to outward forms that won the NIK a modicum of respect in polite society, and tended to eschew conflict. For the less prosperous Dutch Jews, Reformjudentum held virtually no appeal. For those who were attached to old traditions, there were special associations and meetings that catered to that interest. Other working-class Jews were more drawn to socialism. It was this religious climate that allowed Wertheim and Dünner to continue down the same path, in many respects, as earlier in the nineteenth century—a path described by Bart Wallet in the previous chapter as Dutch moderation. It would remain dominant, in a form adapted to modern times, until the 1930s.49

After the failed attempt to found a Liberal Jewish congregation in 1860, reformists went for a long time without a unifying organizational structure. It was not until around 1930 that Liberal Jewish institutions began to emerge in the Netherlands. Although their scale was limited, they represented a major new step in Jewish religious thinking. The initiative came largely from several propertied middle-class families in The Hague (the Levisson-Simonses, Loeb-Levenbachs, Polaks, and Simons-Edersheims), led by the energetic Levie Levisson. Women played a remarkably active role. Foreign influence was also important—not primarily from Germany in this case, but from the English-speaking world, England in particular. The Dutch movement was promoted and supported by the World Union for Progressive Judaism, founded in 1926—another organization in which a woman, Lily Montagu, played an inspirational and foundational role. The first activities specifically for this purpose took place in The

⁴⁸ A. K. Offenberg, E. G. L. Schrijver, and F. J. Hoogewoud (eds.), *Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana: Treasures of Jewish Booklore, Marking the 200th Anniversary of the Birth of Leeser Rosenthal*, 1794–1994 (Amsterdam, 1994).

⁴⁹ See also B. Wallet, *Nieuwe Nederlanders: De integratie van de joden in Nederland 1814–1851* (Amsterdam, 2007), 173–6.

Hague in 1929, and soon afterwards in Amsterdam. After the provisional stage of a Genootschap voor de Joodsche Reformbeweging (Society for the Jewish Reform Movement; 1930) came, later in 1930, the establishment of the Verbond van Liberaal-Religieuze Joden in Nederland (League of Liberal-Religious Jews in the Netherlands). Following failed attempts to integrate this Verbond—loosely modelled after the *Einheitsgemeinde*—into the NIK, two Liberal Jewish religious associations were founded, the first in The Hague in 1937 and the second in Amsterdam in 1938. These were two separate organizations because disagreement had arisen between The Hague and Amsterdam, but they remained united in their umbrella organization, the Verbond. Membership numbers remained limited; the Verbond never had more than a thousand members. These associations included a large proportion of refugees from Germany; in Amsterdam in the late 1930s, that group even constituted the majority. ⁵⁰

Individual Jewish religious life could take place not only within denominations and other strictly religious organizations but also in civil society organizations with a Jewish character. This raises the question of whether there was a cohesive complex of organizations reflecting the Jewish way of life, like the ones for Catholics, orthodox Protestants, and social democrats. In the Dutch context, the formation of such complexes has come to be described in terms of the metaphor of verzuiling ('pillarization'). So was there a Jewish 'pillar', and how did it evolve? It is worth noting, from the outset, that the smaller number of Dutch Jews made it next to impossible for them to establish a Jewish pillar equal in stature to its counterparts. The size of the group in Amsterdam might in theory have made it possible for them to form a kind of pillar at the local level, although that would not have fitted comfortably into national developments. The most important point, however, is that the religious forces at play were insufficient to support anything like a Jewish pillar. In both the middle and working classes, most Jews did not orient their social and political lives mainly towards religious denominations, or towards religion in general. Their political affiliations were generally liberal (in the political sense of classical liberalism) or socialist, and they never aspired to found a Jewish political party alongside the large Protestant and Catholic parties.⁵¹

In hindsight, the path taken by the Jewish community from about 1870 onwards, discussed above, appears to have been the decisive factor. Around that time, developments in both Catholic and orthodox Protestant circles began to take definite shape;

⁵⁰ C. Brasz, *In de tenten van Jaakov: Impressies van 75 jaar Progressief Jodendom in Nederland 1931*–2006 (Amsterdam, 5767/2006), 7–74; ead., 'Dutch Progressive Jews and their Unexpected Key Role in Modern Europe', *European Judaism*, 49/1 (2016), 5–18. See also D. Michman, *Het liberale Jodendom in Nederland 1929*–1943 (Amsterdam, 1988). Strikingly, during the registration of Jews in 1941, these two Liberal Jewish communities were not included as a category, whereas a large range of small Christian denominations was listed alongside the main Jewish denominations, the NIK and PIK: *Statistiek* (see table 2).

⁵¹ Daalder, 'Joden'; I. Schöffer, 'The Jews in the Netherlands: The Position of a Minority through Three Centuries', in id., *Veelvormig verleden* (Amsterdam, 1987), 145–57; and H. Knippenberg, 'Assimilating Jews in Dutch Nation-Building', *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie*, 93/2 (2002), 191–207.

they would result in the formation of broad pillars in opposition to both the dominance of classical political liberalism and the socialist threat. If the formation of a Jewish pillar on a religious basis stood any chance at all, then, as Ivo Schöffer has put it, 'the boat was missed'. ⁵² Later, there were few opportunities for religion to play any role beyond its traditional tasks. Whatever bonds held the Jewish community together—their shared history and customs, for example, and perhaps ties of lineage—they were not strong enough to form a religious or ideological basis for a full-scale pillar.

It is especially significant that attempts to establish Jewish educational organizations and trade unions were fairly unsuccessful. The changes in the Netherlands resulting from the separation of Church and State under the Constitution of 1848 included not only a new structure for religious denominations (kerkgenootschappen) but also major reforms of Jewish education.⁵³ Before that time, there had been Jewish statefunded education (generally primary schools) in many places; such schools offered religious and civic education. The new Education Act of 1857 put an end to that, providing for state schools that would be accessible to all pupils, regardless of their religious backgrounds. It also remained possible for religious or other associations or foundations to establish their own schools (bijzondere scholen, literally 'special schools'), which were not eligible for state funding. Dutch Catholics and orthodox Protestants chose to develop their own confessional schools. These schools became foundation stones in the formation of the Catholic and Protestant Orthodox 'pillars', and later, once the system of pillarization was firmly established, they were granted state funding after all. In Jewish circles, the importance attached to integration into the Dutch nation led to a strong preference for state schools, and the number of bijzondere scholen remained very small. Some resented the statutory provision, dating back to the Batavian Republic, that one task of state education was to encourage 'civic and Christian virtues', but considering the importance of full participation in Dutch society, they swallowed their objections. This choice certainly had the intended effect of 'nationalizing' Dutch Jews—in other words, of encouraging them to identify with the Dutch nation. It also made it necessary for the education committees of the Jewish denominations to organize separate Jewish religious education, offered outside regular school hours —mainly on Sundays and after school on weekdays. This gave teachers of religion a more influential role, as they became vital to the religious development of Jewish children.

⁵² Schöffer, 'The Jews', 155.

The passages on the educational system are based to a large extent on Wallet, "Vorming"; Wallet, "Een veelzijdig"; and K. Hofmeester, "Een teder en belangrijk punt": Opinies over bijzonder onderwijs in joodse kring, 1857–1898', in H. te Velde and H. Verhage (eds.), *De eenheid en de delen: Zuilvorming, onderwijs en natievorming in Nederland* (Amsterdam, 1996), 157–76. See also N. L. Dodde, *Joods onderwijs, een geschiedenis over het tijdvak* 1200 tot 2000 (The Hague, 2009). For the Hague System (Haagsche Stelsel), see also J. Cahen, 'Een hoofdstuk uit de nieuwste geschiedenis van de Haagse Joden', *Die Haghe: Jaarboek* 1979 (The Hague, 1979), 152–295: 202–5.

All in all, this set of factors was not very conducive to Jewish religious life. Despite religious teachers' best efforts to pass on their knowledge of the Jewish tradition, they were partly or wholly unable to reach many children. In 1898 Dünner endeavoured to turn the tide (and, in the process, to counter the growing influence of socialism) by calling for an initiative for a Jewish school system like the ones developed by Dutch Catholics and orthodox Protestants. But this attempt failed, partly because the surprised *parnasim* resisted with all their might. Only after *bijzondere scholen* were granted the same legal status, and the same funding, as state schools—a measure taken in 1917 to resolve the political struggle known as the *schoolstrijd*—was this new opportunity seized, especially in Amsterdam, to develop faith-based Jewish education on a slightly larger scale.

But from 1874 onwards, wealthier families could send their children to Herman Elte's private primary school for a Jewish education along religious lines. And the association Kennis en Godsvrucht (Knowledge and Piety), founded in 1895, played a coordinating role for such Jewish bijzondere scholen, which remained very few in number. From 1924 onwards, there were also privately run Jewish secondary schools; the first modern grammar school (HBS), later known as the Maimonides Lyceum, followed in 1928. In 1925 the nursery school Het Trenshuis opened its doors. It was joined by the Palache primary school in 1929. The independent, privately run Jewish school Talmoed Tora (Talmud Torah) relocated to a better building, also in 1924, and in 1938 it established a second school in the Transvaal district, Talmoed Tora B. In 1930 there were 750 Amsterdam children attending privately run Jewish primary and secondary schools, and 1,750 children attending state schools received extracurricular Jewish religious education, much like the religious lessons available to Catholic and Protestant children outside school hours. But at least 3,000 children received no form of Jewish education whatsoever. An intriguing new variety, the Haagsche Stelsel (Hague System), was introduced in that city in the 1920s. A few public schools with a largely Jewish student body incorporated Jewish religious education into their curriculum and were closed on the sabbath and Jewish religious holidays. This system never spread to other places. The situation varied greatly from one place to another, depending on local circumstances and individuals.

Attempts to establish a Jewish labour movement also eventually failed. The main objective of the Handwerkers Vriendenkring (Manual Workers' Circle of Friends), founded in 1869, was to make a contribution to the social and cultural uplift of Jewish workers in Amsterdam within the established social order. For some time, this association had many members, but it was later overshadowed by the general labour organizations, which had many Jewish members. In 1895 Rabbi Onderwijzer and others sought to establish an organization that would rival the neutral and social democratic labour movement from a religious Jewish perspective: Betsalel, Vereeniging van Israëlitische Werklieden en Handelsbedienden (Betsalel, Association of Israelite

Workers and Commercial Employees), but the organization remained very small and had little influence.

In areas that were more closely related to religious life, or had a long tradition of Jewish activity, initiatives were more likely to get off the ground (or develop further). Alongside religious education, there were countless associations deserving of mention in the field of poor relief—or perhaps 'benevolence' would be a better term. Judaism offers clear guidelines for conduct towards the less fortunate (*tsedakah*). Care for the poor was institutionalized in the early nineteenth century in a network of independent Nederlands Israëlitische Armbesturen (Dutch Israelite Poor Relief Committees; NIAs), one for each main synagogue; the Amsterdam NIA was, of course, the best known. Again, Protestant poor relief served as a model. The NIA developed an array of activities. Later, many specialized Jewish faith-based organizations were founded.

These organizations achieved impressive results, especially in health care. Amsterdam had three Jewish hospitals: the Portugees Israëlitisch Ziekenhuis, the Nederlands Israëlitisch Ziekenhuis, and, in Amsterdam-Zuid, the Centrale Israëlietische Ziekenverpleging for the middle class. There was also a care home for the disabled, De Joodsche Invalide—an initiative of Meijer de Hond, as mentioned above—which became well known even outside the Jewish community. That was partly thanks to its vigorous, modern fundraising campaigns, which involved films and radio advertisements during programming by the AVRO public broadcasting company (which unlike most Dutch public broadcasting companies had no political or religious affiliation).⁵⁴ Other well-known Jewish care institutions included Het Apeldoornsche Bosch (for psychiatric patients), the Bergstichting in Laren (for orphans), and the Rüdelsheimstichting in Hilversum (for disabled children). Many youth and sports clubs were also established, a tendency seen in many parts of Dutch society around that time. These partly served religious purposes (forming part of a Jewish upbringing and enriching the experience of Jewish religious life) but partly had a more social character. Like Jewish dances, which were held mainly outside Amsterdam, such clubs served as meeting places and, in a sense, as marriage markets. Meanwhile, the rise in the number of mixed marriages was unstoppable. After 1900, the budding Zionist movement added another dimension to the whole range of Jewish organizations. But only the fraction of Zionist activity associated with the Mizrachi movement was religious in nature.

The Jewish press was instrumental in creating community spirit among Jews and reached a large percentage of the Jewish population throughout the Netherlands. The *Nieuw Israëlietisch Weekblad* ('New Israëlite Weekly'; *NIW*), established in 1865 by Meyer Marcus Roest, became the pre-eminent periodical for Jews in the Netherlands. ⁵⁵ Under its editors-in-chief Philip Elte (in that role from 1875 to 1918) and Levie Staal (from

⁵⁴ K. Hofmeester, 'Holland's Greatest Beggar: Fundraising and Public Relations at the Joodsche Invalide', *StR* 33 (1999), 47–55.

⁵⁵ I. Lipschits, Honderd jaar NIW: Het Nieuw Israelietisch Weekblad 1865–1965 (Amsterdam, 1966).

1919 to 1938), the magazine took a stand against Zionism. Elte was an especially fierce opponent of the movement. Staal was asked to resign with effect from 1 January 1938 because of stringent objections to his aloof attitude towards Zionism. Besides the NIW, there was also the Centrallblad voor Israëliten in Nederland ('Central Periodical for Israelites in the Netherlands'; CB), established in 1885. This publication was open to contributions on Zionism from the start. In the 1920s, the aforementioned weekly De Vrijdagavond reflected the new surge of interest in Jewish culture and history. These periodicals were distributed nationally, but the NIW and CB placed a clear emphasis on Amsterdam. Rotterdam had the Weekblad voor Israëlietische Huisgezinnen ('Weekly for Israelite Households'). There were practically no other local Jewish periodicals, aside from the many association newsletters.

All things considered, there were certainly tendencies in Dutch Jewish life that, if observed in Catholic and orthodox Protestant circles, we would describe with confidence as aspects of pillarization: the formation of tight-knit communities based on shared religion. In the last analysis, however, Dutch Jews were too small in number and lacking in cohesion to form such a close community, a 'true' Jewish pillar. In fact, Jewish history in this period was dominated by just the opposite tendency. In an accelerating process of social and cultural emancipation, the Jews fanned out, as it were, from the tight-knit Jewish community that had existed under the ancien régime, becoming active participants in general Dutch society at many levels. The complete absence of political organizations of a Jewish nature is another reason not to speak of a fully-fledged Jewish pillar. Nonetheless, there was an unmistakable, though internally diverse, Jewish subculture or sphere of influence that extended well beyond religious life. It was rooted partly in the above-mentioned sense of unity or solidarity with all Jewry. That feeling was expressed in various ways—for example, through assistance to Jews persecuted for their religion in other countries. Such Jews sometimes came to the Netherlands as refugees, a group for which special aid organizations were founded. Dutch Jews also, less deliberately, took part in a certain shared social life, perhaps because they happened to live among other Jews or had absorbed 'Jewish' habits and customs as children. This subculture even influenced some organizations, especially in Amsterdam, that were explicitly not limited to Jews—such as the diamond workers' union, or certain divisions of the liberal and socialist parties. The reason was simple: many Jews belonged to those organizations or played active roles in them.

Outside Amsterdam, this phenomenon was visible only in some of the largest Jewish congregations, as shown by studies of cities such as The Hague and Leeuwarden. Studies of Jews in much smaller congregations show a very different pattern; the process of pillarization hardly even began there. For instance, the very distinguished and prosperous merchant L. E. Wijzenbeek in Culemborg did not by any means hide the fact that he was Jewish, but he was seen primarily as one of the town's leading

⁵⁶ Cahen, 'Een hoofdstuk'; Beem, De Joden van Leeuwarden.

political liberals and accepted without reservation by his fellow townspeople as a member of the local elite.⁵⁷ In this context, it is important to see the status and role of Jews in Dutch society not solely in connection with their religion and Jewish subculture.

Integration and Acculturation

One major characteristic of this historical period was broad and many-faceted participation by Jews in society. Whether by choice or by chance, most Dutch Jews were involved in the larger society in one way or another. They adapted and became integrated while remaining a distinctive group, turning the page once and for all on their insular past. Yet there was still great variation in the nature and intensity of their bonds to Judaism on the one hand and to general Dutch society on the other. Some phenomena discussed in earlier sections fit into this general tendency, such as apostasy, non-participation in organized religion, leaving the traditional Jewish quarters, and not observing the sabbath. This participation in mainstream society by individual Jews and the small Jewish minority—on an equal footing with others, at least in theory—was usually accompanied by wholehearted identification with the Dutch nation, at least among the Jewish middle class. As Wertheim explained: 'Israelites in church, we must elsewhere be fellow citizens in the full, undivided, indivisible sense of the term.' ⁵⁸

The 'nationalization' of Dutch Jewry took another form as well: a variety of Jewish Orangism that, while seen as traditional, was actually new. This nineteenth-century Orangism symbolized the unity of the nation, including the Jews. It found potent expression in the work of Tobias Tal, chief rabbi in The Hague. In 1898 he published *Oranjebloesems, uit de gedenkbladen van Neerlands Israel* ('Orange Blossoms: From the Chronicles of Dutch Israel') to mark the investiture of Queen Wilhelmina in that year. (Note that 'Israel' refers to the Jewish people here and not to any geographical or political entity.) The final sentence of the preface was: 'May this celebratory gift serve its purpose: to show beyond doubt that the love and loyalty to the House of Orange that has always inspired Dutch Israel, as well as the benevolent sympathy that the House of Orange has always shown towards Israel—are historical truths.' This Orangism, often observed at Jewish and national holidays and during visits to Jewish organizations by members of the House of Orange, was not infrequently combined with effusive praise for traditional Dutch toleration, of Jews in particular—sometimes so effusive that it can only be described as myth-making. On such occasions the long-

⁵⁷ I. Brasz, *De Kille van Kuilenburg: Joods leven in Culemborg* (Amsterdam, 1984). This book was one of the earliest studies of Dutch Jews outside the major cities. Since then, a wealth of publications on Dutch Jews in the *mediene* has followed. In the 1980s and 1990s, several more theoretical articles were published on the study of smaller Jewish communities in the Netherlands in *StR*, 17, 19, 25, and 26.

⁵⁸ Quoted in Rijxman, A. C. Wertheim, 235.

⁵⁹ T. Tal, Oranjebloesem uit de gedenkbladen van Neerlands Israel (Amsterdam, 1898).

standing limits to Jewish freedom and equality, which remained as real as ever, were often swept under the carpet. But by the late nineteenth century, dissenting voices began to be heard, especially in the Jewish working class. In 1893 Queen Emma and her daughter Wilhelmina, still a child at the time, met with catcalls during a ride through the Amsterdam Jewish quarter, and there were also protests against this form of Orangism in connection with the investiture in 1898. In the twentieth century, left-wing Jews tended to agree with much of the socialist criticism (sometimes quite harsh) of the monarchy and Orangism. This began to create a fault line in the Jewish community. And in 1898, Jewish socialists organized the first public protests against Jewish Orangism.⁶⁰

According to the ideal articulated by Wertheim, a sense of affiliation with the Jewish religion or one's Jewish ancestry was mainly a private matter which neither had nor should have much direct relevance to one's political, social, or cultural behaviour. One frequent practical result of this attitude was participation in one of the other pillars. For obvious reasons, very few Jews became involved in either of the two major faith-based pillars (orthodox Protestant and Catholic). Although Christian organizations intermittently put great effort into converting Jews, only a very small number became Catholic or Protestant, often in connection with a mixed marriage. Highprofile conversions, of the type seen in the early nineteenth century (as in the cases of Capadose, Da Costa, and Lipman), no longer occurred in later years. The Nazi census of 1941 counted some 140,000 'full Jews' in total, of which only 1,915 belonged to Christian religious denominations (about 1.5 per cent; see Table 7.2 above); this group included a relatively large number of German refugees. According to the same census, 12,571 'full Jews' did not belong to any religious denomination—about 9 per cent. Among the so-called half- and quarter-Jews, the proportions were quite different: only 395 out of 20,885 (almost 2 per cent) were registered with one of the Jewish denominations, while 3,131 (15 per cent) were registered as Catholic, 5,021 (24 per cent) as Protestant, and 12,338 (59 per cent) as having no religious affiliation. These figures clearly show how closely mixed marriage and the process of secularization were interrelated in the years preceding the occupation of the Netherlands.

As all this suggests, Jews' social activities outside their own community mostly took place in a politically liberal, a social democratic, or a non-denominational setting, and in the areas less affected by pillarization, such as economic life, the arts and sciences, and culture in the broadest sense. Such activities often had few, if any, specifically Jewish aspects. Sometimes the Jewish background of the participants played a role, if Jewish themes (or themes perceived as such) arose, or if Jewish traditions had some influence. Before local politics became dominated by modern political parties, there were informal 'Jewish seats' on local councils, like those reserved for other minorities

⁶⁰ J.-M. Cohen and B. Wallet, 'Majesteit en minderheid: Vier eeuwen Oranjes en de joden', in eid. (eds.), *Joden en het Huis van Oranje: Vier eeuwen geschiedenis, kunst en cultuur* (Zutphen, 2018), 14–117: 15–18 and 73–5.

(usually Catholics). Such seats were occupied by local luminaries who were known to be Jewish. This made it possible for the Jewish elite to promote their group interests in negotiation with elites from other groups, which later became pillars. But there were no activities organized exclusively by and for Jews. Unlike the Catholics and orthodox Protestants, the Jews did not develop into a pillar. On the contrary, Jews who became active in party politics almost always did so within the liberal and socialist pillars.

The work of Jewish members of liberal and socialist parties in Amsterdam and a few other places can be illustrated by a number of examples of leading Jewish local councillors and aldermen. In Amsterdam at one point in the early 1930s, much was made of the fact that four of the six aldermen were Jewish (the 'aldermen affair', wethoudersaffaire): Ephraim Joseph Abrahams for the liberal democrats and Emanuel Boekman, Salomon Rodrigues ('Monne') de Miranda, and Eduard Polak for the social democrats. In Almelo, the well-known Salomonson textile family had a member on the local council continuously from 1843 to 1918. Furthermore, Godfried Salomonson Hzn served as an alderman for the liberals for around twenty years in total.⁶¹ In national politics, there was almost always at least one Jewish member of the Lower House of Parliament (Tweede Kamer), and more than one after 1887. Four Jewish parliamentarians were elected in 1891, the same number in 1913, and five in 1937.⁶² In view of these figures, it is noteworthy that there was only one Jewish minister between 1870 and 1940: Eduard Ellis van Raalte (justice minister, 1905–8). Michel Henri Godefroi, who served in Parliament from 1849 to 1881, had preceded Van Raalte as the first Jewish minister (also of justice, 1860-2).63

The Jewish background of these politicians tended to attract some public attention, and they were sometimes seen as informal representatives of 'Jewish interests'. In election campaigns, Jewish candidates sometimes made an explicit appeal to 'their own' Jewish voters. But that was a secondary matter; their political beliefs and struggles were the main thing. In Jewish circles, there was frequent dissatisfaction with the degree to which Jewish politicians promoted Jewish interests. Jews were very rarely appointed to the position of mayor, but there were exceptions, such as Eduard Jacobs (the brother of the well-known feminist Aletta Jacobs), who became the mayor of Lonneker in 1893 and of Almelo in 1906. ⁶⁴ There do not appear to have been any Jewish King's or Queen's

⁶¹ F. C. Brasz, 'De Joodse stem in de Nederlandse gemeentepolitiek', *StR* 19 (1985), 299–311. See also A. G. de Vries, 'The Election of Jews to the Provinciale Staten of North Holland 1850–1919', *StR* 30 (1996), 41–55.

⁶² J. Th. J. van den Berg, *De toegang tot het Binnenhof: De maatschappelijk herkomst van de Tweede-Kamerleden* (Weesp, 1983), 100 (table). K. Hofmeester, 'Jewish Parliamentary Representatives in the Netherlands, 1848–1914', in J. Frishman et al. (eds.), *Borders and Boundaries in and around Dutch Jewish History* (Amsterdam, 2011), 65–80: 80, also mentions five parliamentarians before 1913 by name, including some not formally registered as part of a Jewish denomination.

⁶³ W. P. Secker, Ministers in beeld: De sociale en functionele herkomst van de Nederlandse ministers (1848–1990) (Leiden, 1991).

⁶⁴ I. de Wilde, Een sterke wilskracht: Vijf ambitieuze broers en zusters van Aletta Jacobs (Groningen, 2018), 92–108.

Commissioners (that is, heads of provincial governments) or ambassadors. All the evidence suggests great reticence (never openly articulated) in appointing Jews to public offices in which they would be responsible for representing the nation as whole. (A similar attitude towards Catholics had prevailed for many years, and it sometimes persisted.)

In the period covered in this chapter, the political activities of Jews in the liberal parties fitted the same pattern visible in the economic realm: individual development among the Jewish middle class. By the late nineteenth century, the socialist workers' movement held great appeal, especially in Amsterdam, for the Jewish proletariat, which made considerable economic and social progress around that time. This was partly because of the class consciousness in Jewish religious denominations and the paternalistic attitude of the *parnasim*. Those issues made Jewish religious life less attractive to Jews from the lower social strata than the socialist alternative, which was more than just a political party. It was the social democratic pillar as a whole—a cohesive complex of organizations in diverse areas of life, connected by their ideology and, still more powerfully, by their characteristic atmosphere—that offered many Jewish (and other) workers opportunities for new kinds of personal activities.

In the early stages, this was most apparent among the diamond workers, where Jews were in the majority. 65 As mentioned above, they had experienced the prosperous Cape Period but then found themselves in conditions much like those of many other workers. The establishment and evolution of the Algemene Nederlandse Diamantbewerkersbond (General Dutch Diamond Workers' Union, ANDB, 1894; PLATE 56) is a success story that has been told many times. Several conditions favoured that success: the concentration of the diamond trade in Amsterdam, international monopolization in the industry, and the relative weakness and small scale of the employers.66 A complicated prior history culminated in the establishment of a strong trade union, which even succeeded in making membership mandatory—a rare achievement in the Netherlands. From the start, Jews played a vital role in the union and its subdivisions. Towering above them all was Henri Polak (1868–1943; PLATE 57), a major figure in the social democratic and labour movements more generally.⁶⁷ Many other individuals might also be mentioned, such as Jos Loopuit and Adolf Samson de Levita. Because of these Jewish leaders and the Jewish majority in the industry and the union, the ANDB was widely seen as a more or less Jewish organization. Strictly speaking, that was

⁶⁵ For general sources on the diamond industry, see n. 12 above. On the ANDB, see K. Hofmeester (ed.), Een schitterende erfenis: 125 jaar nalatenschap van de Algemene Nederlandse Diamantbewerkersbond (Zutphen, 2019); see also H. Schijf and P. Tammes, 'Verbondenheid en lidmaatschapsduur: De leden van de Algemeene Nederlandsche Diamantbewerkersbond (ANDB) in de eerste decennia van zijn bestaan', Mens en Maatschappij, 88 (2013), 300–23. On the rosette cutters and their trade union, see n. 27 above.

⁶⁶ T. van Tijn, 'De Algemeene Nederlandse Diamantbewerkersbond (ANDB); een succes en zijn verklaring', in P. A. M. Geurts and F. A. M. Messing (eds.), Economische ontwikkeling en sociale emancipatie (The Hague, 1977), vol. ii, 93–109.
⁶⁷ Bloemgarten, Henri Polak.

incorrect; the union had no religious affiliation and the large majority of non-Jewish diamond workers were members and eligible to serve as union officials. Yet the subculture of diamond workers certainly had a Jewish tinge.

The establishment of a general labour organization in this sector had been far from an automatic process. Diamonds were processed in many different and separate ways by a variety of specialized workers, and there were differences in payment and working conditions. The distinction between Jews and non-Jews often played a role, with the more remunerative sectors dominated by Jews. Most companies were either 'Jewish' or 'non-Jewish'; for instance, some were closed on Saturday and others on Sunday. The establishment of the ANDB followed most directly from a strike by the non-Jews in the sector—the 'Christians', as they were often called. This situation could have led to a wider gap between the two groups of workers and the establishment of separate Jewish unions alongside the general ones, as was the case in London and Paris, but it did not work out that way. That was partly because of the absence of large groups of eastern European immigrants, such as usually took the initiative in founding separate Jewish organizations elsewhere, and above all because of the judicious actions of labour leaders in Amsterdam, especially Henri Polak and the non-Jewish Jan van Zutphen. They recognized the advantages of cooperation and mutual solidarity and put great effort into those objectives.

Even after the successful strike and the foundation of the ANDB, Polak and Van Zutphen continued to work together. They had to, because in those early years when many conflicts with employers were still being fought out, tensions between Jews and non-Jews occasionally ran high. Later, that was seldom the case. Of course, to avoid this type of friction, strict religious neutrality was essential, and so the ANDB rarely threw its weight behind typically Jewish demands. For example, the union rarely took action in connection with work on Saturday. In 1901, when Polak called on jewellers, more than 90 per cent of whom were Jewish, not to require their Orthodox Jewish employees to work on Saturday, De Miranda argued that Polak should not use his influence for the benefit of the 'Jewish clergy'. ⁶⁸ For the secularized members of the ANDB, working on Saturday was not an urgent issue. In 1902 only 1,700 out of 7,849 members signed a petition to take more action on the issue of the sabbath rest. Competing faith-based unions, such as the aforementioned Betsalel, remained very small and had no choice but to work very closely with the ANDB. In this context, the ANDB decided in 1903 to negotiate with employers to prevent forced labour on the sabbath. ⁶⁹

The ANDB also declared itself politically neutral at first but paid little attention to this official position in practice, and, in time, formally and undeniably took its place in the complex, or pillar, of social democratic organizations. The ANDB served as the model for the Nederlands Verbond van Vakverenigingen (Dutch Association of Trade Unions, NVV), founded in 1905, and the most prominent members of the ANDB were

also involved in both the NVV and the Sociaal-Democratische Arbeiderspartij (Social Democratic Workers' Party, SDAP). In 1894 Polak was one of the founders of the SDAP, the party chairman, and a senator. He was also one of the driving forces behind the NVV and a mainstay of that organization. One striking aspect of the ANDB, again inspired by Polak, was its cultural policy. Polak, inspired in turn by the ideas of William Morris, took on the role of public educator with great energy and persuasive force, taking all sorts of measures to encourage diamond workers not merely to strive for better material conditions, but also to lead more decent, regulated lives and, as far as possible, to take advantage of cultural offerings. The famous union building, built by the architect Hendrik Petrus Berlage and decorated by the artist Richard Nicolaus Roland Holst, symbolized this pursuit. Although devoid of any animosity towards Jewish origins or traditions, such efforts were focused entirely on general, national Dutch culture, sometimes with a hint of internationalism.

Henri Polak presented himself as a Jew emphatically and without hesitation and felt a strong attachment to Jewish workers. At the same time, he was highly integrated into Dutch society. Time and again, he vigorously professed his Dutchness and his love of the Netherlands and Dutch culture. In response to a question in 1928, he said he felt Dutch among the Dutch and Jewish among Jews. To him, these were different types of affiliations that coexisted without ruling each other out or even creating any friction. If there was any relationship between them, it may have been in Polak's emphasis on the struggle for justice and community spirit, virtues that he regarded as highly developed among Jews, and which in his mind were linked to social democracy. At the same time, he believed that one central factor in his connection to the Jewish people was what he, unburdened by later history, referred to as 'race'. 70 Yet in his pursuit of social and democratic ideals, he never explicitly referred to Judaism or to Jewish traditions. What he cared about was Dutch society and the status of workers in it, neither excluding nor emphasizing Jewish workers.

What was very true of diamond workers and the ANDB was also more or less true of the other segments of the Jewish working class and the many branches of the socialist movement. Jews participated in many organizations and fields of activity; their religion was generally no secret but did not play a major role. Where Jews were relatively numerous, particular chapters or activities might take on something of a Jewish character; a well-known example is the electoral district in Amsterdam-Oost (Transvaalbuurt-Oosterpark). This was supposed to be taken into account in propaganda efforts and candidate selection, but it rarely if ever became an important theme (and certainly not at the national level). In this context, anti-Jewish feelings and state-

⁷⁰ For further reflection on this statement, see S. Bloemgarten, 'Henry Polak: A Jew and a Dutchman', *DJH* i. 261–78.

⁷¹ M. van Amerongen et al., Voor buurt en beweging: Negentig jaar sociaaldemocratie tussen IJ en Amstel (Amsterdam, 1984).

ments were encountered in every possible degree of severity. Such feelings and statements were to some extent part of the fabric of the early socialist movement, just as they were a widespread part of the fabric of Dutch and especially international society. In socialist circles, anti-Jewish remarks were especially likely to be linked to anticapitalism, for instance in *Recht voor Allen* ('Justice for All'), the magazine of the early, radical Dutch socialists. Around 1890, the leader of the early revolutionary socialist movement in the Netherlands, Ferdinand Domela Nieuwenhuis, did not hesitate to use antisemitic language in conflicts (internal or otherwise). This explains why Jews very rarely joined early, radical socialist organizations such as the Sociaal Democratische Bond (Social Democratic Union) and instead were drawn *en masse* to their competitors, the social democrats.⁷²

In the social democratic movement, antisemitic remarks were no more than rare, isolated incidents. But there were concerns about the movement's public image. The SDAP was worried it might be seen as a 'party full of Jews' and discouraged members from writing frequently and fiercely about Jewish issues, as Asser Benjamin Kleere-koper, Henri Polak, and Meyer Sluyser (the editor of the propaganda magazine *Vrijheid, Arbeid, Brood* ('Freedom, Labour, Bread'), published by the SDAP and NVV) did in the 1930s. But most Jewish members were well integrated into the larger society, as mentioned above, and not focused on specifically Jewish issues.⁷³ For example, others active in socialist circles in various capacities included Salomon Kleerekoper and Salomon (Sam) de Wolff (two economists inspired by Marxist ideas), Nehemia de Lieme (the founder of the social democratic insurance company N.V. Centrale Arbeiders Verzekerings- en Depositobank, who was not in fact a socialist but was an active Zionist), and David Wijnkoop and Paul de Groot (two communist politicians and each other's rivals).

The masses of party and union members also included many Jews, although of course they never constituted more than a small minority of the social democratic pillar. Within that pillar, they underwent the same process so clearly visible in the case of the diamond workers, becoming gradually integrated—socially, politically, and culturally—into Dutch society as a whole, which remained very middle-class in character. In short, for many poor Jews, the way up and out of the inhumane conditions of working-class life was through participation in a kind of middle-class lifestyle coloured by social democracy. As early as 1894, the editors of *Ons Blad. Socialistisch Orgaan voor Israëlieten* ('Our Magazine: Socialist Mouthpiece for Israelites'), which had been established not long before and in which Bram Reens played a major role, went as far as to

⁷² J. W. Stutje, 'Antisemitisme onder Nederlandse socialisten in het *fin de siècle'*, *BMGN*— *Low Countries Historical Review*, 129/3 (2014), 4–26. See also J. W. Stutje, *Ferdinand Domela Nieuwenhuis: Een romantische revolutionair* (Amsterdam, 2012).

⁷³ M. Schrevel, "Als socialist, niet als Israëliet": De SDAP en het Joodse vraagstuk', *De Gids*, 156 (1993), 501–10; Bloemgarten, *Henri Polak: Sociaal democraat*, 616–17.

write: 'We have ceased to become Jews and have become socialists. The term "Jew", hurled at us as an insult, pains us, but when the insult is "socialist", we shrug it off.'⁷⁴

Few commentators went that far, but for most of them, the relationship between being Jewish and having socialist beliefs (whether social democratic or communist) was not a burning issue. Those who consciously grappled with the combination did not arrive at any generally accepted solution. On the contrary, the emergence of Zionism only made the problem more complex for those who reflected on it. This issue also made the individual Jew's relationship to Dutchness more complicated. The questions and dilemmas involved were not solely political or intellectual in nature; many people chose their positions on them for intuitive or emotional reasons. As Evelien Gans remarked in her thorough and subtle book about Jewish socialism and Zionism in the Netherlands, De kleine verschillen die het leven uitmaken ('The Little Differences that Make a Life'), the 'habits of the heart' were a constant factor. Everyone caught in the dynamic interaction of these disparate forces—Judaism, socialism, Dutchness, and Zionism made continual choices, sometimes conscious, sometimes unconscious, and usually somewhere in between. Further analysis reveals a spectrum of identities in socialist circles, from radical internationalist communists and socialists to moderate, nationally oriented social democrats, and from denial of the relevance of Jewish origins to acknowledgement of Jewishness (although obviously not in a religious sense in those circles) as the most fundamental form of identity.⁷⁵

A similar range of variation marked Jewish activities in the cultural domain. The question of whether, aside from religious objects, there is really any typically Jewish art, or whether there are specifically Jewish characteristics that make the work of Jewish (or originally Jewish) artists identifiable as such, was answered in diverse ways. In the Netherlands, there appear to have been very few artists who focused exclusively on Jewish topics and made a point of working only for Jews. Some Jewish artists clearly addressed Jewish themes in their work—as did some non-Jewish artists. But there was no well-defined 'Jewish school' of visual artists or writers. These artists displayed their Jewish identity or origins to very different degrees. In the words of Sara Tas and Edward van Voolen, in the nineteenth century 'Jewish artists [appeared] on the scene, some of whom openly professed their Jewish identity, while others only indirectly referred to their origins, or not at all. The desire for social acceptance went hand in hand with the search for a new identity in a society that was more open than ever before.' At the same time, they became involved in established art movements, and those affiliations were visible in their work. Some played significant roles in the vanguard of modern art. ⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Quoted in K. Hofmeester, "In den Kerk Israëlieten"—en daarbuiten? De identiteit van de joodse minderheid in Nederland 1796–1940', *Ex Tempore*, 11 (1992), 235–43: 241.

⁷⁵ E. Gans, De kleine verschillen die het leven uitmaken: Een historische studie naar joodse sociaaldemocraten en socialistisch-zionisten in Nederland (Amsterdam, 1999).

⁷⁶ S. Tas and E. van Voolen, 'De gebroeders Verveer: Joodse kunstenaars?', in De gebroeders Verveer: Haagse

The work of the painter Jozef Israels, one of the leading names in the Hague School, includes a variety of Jewish scenes and shows a certain interest in Jewish themes, but could not be described as a characteristically Jewish body of work. The same is true of the sculptures of Joseph Mendes da Costa. But Paul Citroen, who was born in Berlin and settled in Amsterdam in 1927, becoming a major figure in the international avant-garde, and the graphic artist Fré Cohen, who moved mainly in social democratic circles, show almost no engagement with Jewish subject matter, although Cohen did work for Jewish organizations later in life.

In the field of literature, a large body of writing—mainly by Jewish authors described life in Jewish communities, particularly the Amsterdam Jewish quarter (sometimes called a ghetto).⁷⁷ Yet these writings do not always tell us anything significant about the authors' connections to their surroundings (or former surroundings). Herman Heijermans, Israël Querido, and Emanuel Querido, inspired by socialist ideals, called attention to social injustice in the Netherlands, drawing liberally on the experiences of the Jewish working class. Heijermans has been called anti-Jewish because of his works Diamantstad ('Diamond City') and Ghetto, but his main intention seems to have been to protest the inhumane living and working conditions of impoverished Jews, as well as to attack organized religion and its leaders more generally and the Jewish denomination and its leadership in particular. The poet Abraham Eliazer (Bram) van Collem combined a Jewish (and initially Zionist) perspective with fervent socialist convictions. Jacob Israël de Haan started out as a radical socialist, estranged from his parents' Orthodox household. He caused a scandal by raising issues of homosexuality in Pijpelijntjes (1904; the title refers to the Amsterdam district of De Pijp). But after his conversion to Mizrachi (religious Zionism), he became the 'poet of the Jewish Song' and emigrated to Palestine, where he made a rapid shift to anti-Zionist Orthodoxy and was murdered by Zionists in 1924 (the first political murder in the Yishuv, Jewish Palestine).⁷⁸ His sister, known under the name of Carry van Bruggen, who had a mixed marriage, wrote several novels with trenchant descriptions of the Jewish setting in which she had grown up. But other strands of her work were at least as important: her interest in the status of women and in philosophical issues. Herman de Man (a pseudonym of Salomon Hamburger), who became Catholic, did not address Jewish themes in his novels of rural life.

A surprising number of musicians were Jewish, such as Lex van Delden, Sem Dresden, Jo Juda, Bertus van Lier, Rosa Spier, Max Tak, and the violin teacher Oscar

meesters van de romantiek (exhibition catalogue, Zutphen, 2015), 9–27: 21. See also E. van Voolen, *Joodse Kunst en Cultuur* (Zutphen, 2006), and T. Spaans-van der Bijl (ed.), *De Joodse bijdrage aan de Nederlandse cultuur* (anniversary issue of *Misjpoge*, 1987–92).

⁷⁷ In *Bloed en rozen: Geschiedenis van de Nederlandse literatuur 1900–1945* (Amsterdam, 2015), Jacqueline Bel points out a category of 'novels of Jewish life' from around 1900 (pp. 152–8).

⁷⁸ J. Fontijn, Onrust: Het leven van Jacob Israël de Haan 1881–1924 (Amsterdam, 2015).

Back. Most of them participated fully in the Dutch music scene, uninfluenced in that regard by their Jewish background. The nature of this art form makes it almost impossible to identify specifically Jewish themes or characteristics, aside from the tradition of the hazanut in synagogue services. Various Jews rose to prominence in the Dutch theatre and cabaret. Their success was partly rooted in a tradition of Jewish entertainment (or at least of Jews in the entertainment business) and of a certain brand of humour (gein) seen as specific to Amsterdam Jews, which involved Jewish characters (such Potasch and Perlemoer or Sam and Moos) and raised Jewish themes. But in general, the work of Jewish actors and cabaret performers was far from being distinctively Jewish, with the exception of the Yiddish theatre, which received a new impetus from eastern European immigration. Well-known names in this industry included Eduard Jacobs, Louis Davids, Louis de Vries, and Esther de Boer-van Rijk, whose performance as Kniertje in Heijermans's Op hoop van zegen (known in English translation as The Good Hope) was legendary.⁷⁹ The well-known theatre called the Hollandsche Schouwburg (which opened as the Artis Schouwburg in 1892 and was renamed in 1894), in the new Plantage district (near the old Jewish quarter) where a considerable number of wealthy Jews had made their homes, counted many Jews in its audiences. Before 1940, however, it cannot be described as a typically Jewish theatre. 80 The role of Jews in the Dutch film and cinema industry has been mentioned above.

The sciences and scholarly disciplines could be Jewish in their subject matter, but not in their methods. The aim of the early nineteenth-century Wissenschaft des Judentums movement in Germany was to study Judaism scientifically, in the broadest sense of the term, and thus to contribute to modern Jewish identity (or identities); the movement's emphasis was accordingly on the humanities. Critical research of this type also took place in the Netherlands, although it was small in scale, made slow progress at first, and took place outside academia. This tendency led to the reorganization of the rabbinical seminary's educational programme on a more scholarly footing. The establishment of the Genootschap voor Joodsche Wetenschap (Society for Jewish Studies), mentioned above in a different context, can be seen as the late institutionalization of this movement in the Netherlands, raising it to a higher level, even if the group of truly active contributors remained small. The driving force behind this society was the bibliographer and historian Sigmund Seeligmann (1873-1940), and the aforementioned librarians were also leading participants. But the appointment of the Semitist Juda Palache (1886–1944) as a professor in Amsterdam was not part of this tradition and met with some resistance in the faculties of theology and letters. Yet in his research, Palache

⁷⁹ J. Groeneboer and H. Berg (eds.), 'Dat is de kleine man': 100 jaar joden in het Amsterdamse amusement (Zwolle, 1995).

⁸⁰ F. van Vree, H. Berg, and D. Duindam (eds.), *De Hollandsche Schouwburg: Theater, deportatieplaats, plek van herinnering* (Amsterdam, 2013).

went along with the standard practices in his field, which had a strong Christian influence, and maintained a high standard of scholarship.⁸¹

The same applied in the other academic disciplines. ⁸² Jews were certainly appointed as professors (in disproportionate numbers, in fact), but their work was not distinctively Jewish in content. That held true even for deliberate, active champions of Jewish interests such as David Cohen, a professor of ancient history and a Zionist, in Amsterdam. Kurt Baschwitz, also in Amsterdam, was a pioneer in the field of the press, propaganda, and public opinion. Notable figures in the natural sciences included Paul Ehrenfest, a theoretical physicist who became Hendrik Antoon Lorentz's successor in Leiden in 1912 and whose friend Albert Einstein, who had turned down that position, himself held a special chair in Leiden for some time. Ernst Julius Cohen in Utrecht was a very prolific researcher of high international standing, and the physicist Leonard Ornstein advocated a direct link between the scientific community and the business sector. The high-profile Groningen philosopher and freethinker Leo Polak and the Rotterdam business economist Nico Jacob Polak were renowned and respected, especially in the Netherlands. These are only some of the leading names; others, in legal and medical fields, are mentioned above in a different context.

In short, whether in economic life, politics, civil society, or culture and scholarship, the integration of Jews into Dutch society was a striking and powerful trend. Jewish participation in Dutch society was increasing in all sorts of ways. From this point of view, membership of religious denominations, and any related social activities or public expressions of a Jewish background or Jewishness, were mainly a question of personal preference and taste. Dutch social and political arrangements, which had in a sense been constructed by minorities, offered ways, in principle, for Jews to make a place for themselves, collectively and individually, without too much difficulty and to contribute to Dutch society. A generally high level of acculturation meant that differences from other Dutch nationals were relatively small, and many such differences disappeared over time.

Antisemitism

Yet this integration never became complete. As differentiated, and even fragmented, as Dutch Jews were, they remained a Jewish minority, set apart in a more fundamental way than other minorities such as Catholics, the smaller Protestant groups, and the various types of socialists. Jews could never escape their origins, so to speak, because

⁸¹ I. Zwiep, 'Epigones and Identity: Jewish Scholarship in The Netherlands, 1850–1940', in Frishman and Berg (eds.), *Cultural Maelstrom*, 53–65. See also Julie-Marthe Cohen's introductory talk at the symposium marking the Society's ninetieth anniversary in 2009 on the organization's website, <www.genootschapjood sewetenschap.nl/geschiedenis>.

⁸² Fuks-Mansfeld et al. (eds.), *Joden in Nederland*, contains numerous biographical sketches of Jewish scholars.

they were almost always identified in one way or another and reminded of those origins. Such identification usually relied on widely held international stereotypes of Jews and their typical behaviour, way of speaking, and external appearance. For example, the age-old stories about Jews murdering Christ were widespread, and Jews were often depicted as hungry for power and money and loud or pushy. One noteworthy feature of these stereotypes was the inconsistency between them; Jews were said to be clever and rich, but also poor and bumbling, both capitalists and Bolsheviks, both powerful and parasitic, both superior and inferior. The stereotype of the Jew is Janus-faced, according to Evelien Gans. 83 The supposed recognizability of Dutch Jews was partly the result of conscious choices on their part and partly of the unconscious inheritance of elements of Jewish tradition. Above all, however, it was the result of the attitude of the non-Jewish majority, of the attribution of stereotypical traits even when they were barely present, or not at all. Although Dutch society displayed tolerance and afforded opportunities for individual development irrespective of one's origins, it also, like all European societies, set definite limits and harboured anti-Jewish sentiments (antisemitism) in many forms and gradations.84

From a comparative perspective, Dutch antisemitism was mild and moderate, and it was often not expressed very openly but in a somewhat secretive manner. The manifest, virulent antisemitism that erupted over the years in eastern Europe, France, Germany, Austria, and elsewhere could also occasionally be observed in the Netherlands—in response to the Dreyfus affair, for instance—but tended to be seen as bad manners. No pogroms ever took place. The formal grant of equal legal rights (the emancipation of 1796) was never questioned, and Jews rarely met with barriers to their participation in society. Yet unmistakably, especially in the personal sphere, there were many forms of distancing, discrimination, and antisemitism. Participants in public, political debates sometimes unexpectedly made antisemitic remarks for opportunistic reasons (examples include Domela Nieuwenhuis, mentioned above, and Abraham Kuyper, discussed below). To gain a clearer impression of these feelings and behaviours, it is worthwhile to distinguish among various forms and types of antisemitism.

The first form was anti-Judaic, at least in origin; this was found mainly among Christians. There was also a secularized variant that was primarily an extreme form of

⁸³ E. Gans, "They Have Forgotten to Gas You": Post-1945 Antisemitism in the Netherlands', in P. Essed and I. Hoving (eds.), *Dutch Racism* (Amsterdam, 2014), 71–100, esp. 74–7, and R. Ensel and E. Gans (eds.), *The Holocaust, Israel and 'the Jew': Histories of Antisemitism in Post-War Dutch Society* (Amsterdam, 2016).

⁸⁴ 'Antisemitism' is used here as an umbrella term (coined in the 19th c.) for a very wide ranging of feelings, attitudes, and behaviours directed against Jews. For a good overview, see ch. II ("De excuses van mevrouw Mees": Nederland tot 1945) in C. Quispel, *Anti-Joodse beeldvorming en Jodenhaat: De geschiedenis van het antisemitisme in West-Europa* (Hilversum, 2015), 198–217.

⁸⁵ K. Hofmeester, 'Antisemitismus in den Niederlanden im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert', in H. Lademacher, R. Loos, and S. Groenveld (eds.), Ablehnung—Duldung—Anerkennung: Toleranz in den Niederlanden und in Deutschland. Ein historischer und aktueller Vergleich (Münster, 2004), 604–30.

rationalist religious criticism, which rejected all faiths but singled out Orthodox Judaism as exceptionally backward and narrow-minded. A more significant strain, however, was the centuries-old resentment among Christians of the fact that the Chosen People of the Old Testament refused to accept Jesus as their messiah. This refusal mattered so much to Christians because Judaism was the wellspring of Christianity. In practice, this fundamental theological dispute took many different forms. For example, it contributed to the belief that Jews were destined to have a detrimental influence on society and even formed a threat for that reason. There were popular stories, some quite gruesome, about Jews who, after the murder of Christ, went on periodically committing ritual murder. These feelings about Jews and Judaism, rooted in religion, varied greatly in intensity. For many people and in many cases, the problem did not seem serious. In practice, many Christians saw Jews mainly as one minority among others, with their own right to exist; this perspective even inspired some of them to fight antisemitism as a matter of principle, despite their religious disagreements with Jews. Some felt the need to attempt to convert Jews; special organizations (jodenzending, 'Jewish missionary work') were established for the purpose, especially in Protestant circles. When very few Jews responded by joining a Christian church, this sometimes caused resentment, which could easily become associated with other negative images of Jewish character and conduct. But that was certainly not always the case. The belief that the Jews were the Chosen People sometimes prompted a conciliatory attitude towards them. All these types of antisemitism involved seeing the Jews as an exceptional group that—as small as it was—merited special attention.86

All the subtleties of the matter cannot be fully explored here; we must confine ourselves to a few observations. The image of Jews as Christ-killers (which found expression even in the Catholic liturgy), the supposed immorality of the Talmud, and the stories of ritual murder played an especially large role in Catholic circles. In 1890 the town of Meerssen in Limburg even had a short-lived antisemitic weekly, *De Talmudjood* ('The Talmud Jew'). Especially vehement antisemitism was occasionally found in ultra-conservative Catholic circles and, in the 1920s and 1930s, among Catholics influenced by fascism. Arnold Meijer's Zwart Front (Black Front) is a clear example of this last group. Nor was antisemitism absent from more progressive, anti-capitalist Catholic circles, but the opposing voices were more powerful there. The political leaders

⁸⁶ J. E. Bastiaanse, De Jodenzending en de eerste decennia van de Hervormde Raad voor Kerk en Israël 1925–1965: Een generatie in dienst van de Joods-Christelijke toenadering, 2 vols. (Zoetermeer, 1995); G. J. van Klinken, Opvattingen in de gereformeerde kerken in Nederland over het Jodendom 1896–1970 (Kampen, 1996); M. Poorthuis and T. Salemink, Een donkere spiegel: Nederlandse katholieken over joden. Tussen antisemitisme en erkenning 1870–2005 (Nijmegen, 2006); J. Ramakers, 'Conservatisme en antisemitisme: Nederlandse katholieken als "medestrijders" en "tegenstanders" van de joden 1796–1940', Trajecta: Tijdschrift voor de geschiedenis van het katholicisme in de Nederlanden, 15 (2006), 61–75; T. H. M. van Schaik, Vertrouwde vreemden: Betrekkingen tussen katholieken en joden in Nederland 1930–1990 (Baarn, 1992); and E. Sanders, Levi's eerste kerstfeest: Jeugdverhalen over jodenbekering (1792–2015) (Nijmegen, 2017).

Herman Schaepman and Piet Aalberse declared their opposition to antisemitism in no uncertain terms, thus preventing it from exerting a major influence on Catholic politics in the Netherlands. And in 1926, Amici Israel was founded by Anton van Asseldonk of the order of the Fratres Cruciferi, the Franciscan Laetus Himmelreich, and Francesca (Sophie) van Leer, who came from a Jewish background and had converted to Catholicism. This movement, which had global ambitions and was inspired by religious millennialism, openly defended Judaism and showed great sympathy for Zionism and the kibbutz movement. In a short time, Amici Israel won considerable support among bishops and priests. As early as 1928, however, it was disbanded by the Pope, mainly because of theological objections.⁸⁷

Within the diverse world of Dutch Protestantism, it was mainly in orthodox Protestant circles that Judaism received special attention, both from a theological/ religious perspective and with regard to the role of Jews in the present day. Besides engaging in theological discourse and occasional intensive missionary work, orthodox Protestants also sometimes suggested that unwanted developments in secularizing society were linked to the Jews. Furthermore, they saw liberalism as their main political enemy (later joined by the equal threat of socialism). Against this background, they sometimes regarded Jews as the embodiment of modernity in a more general sense, which found expression not only in irreligion, modern industry, and the aforementioned political movements, but also in decadent phenomena such as the mass media, modern art, and film. In the conservative struggle for the Christian character of Dutch society, it is worth noting the role of Abraham Kuyper as both the religious/ ecclesiastical and the political leader of the orthodox Protestants. Early in his career, in the 1870s, Kuyper drew a link between Jews and liberalism, to which he was diametrically opposed, especially in the area of education. Support from Jews—especially Jewish journalists working for the liberal press—for liberal policies led Kuyper to denigrate liberalism in his published writing as being too much under Jewish influence: Liberalisten en Joden ('Liberalists and Jews') was the telling title of a collection of articles from 1878. Somewhat like Domela Nieuwenhuis after him, Kuyper made opportunistic use of antisemitism in his particular historical context. He also made negative statements about Jews later in his career and spoke of a Jewish problem. In his political career, however, he seldom showed any antisemitic leanings. But he did remain fascinated sometimes in a positive sense—with cultural and religious ideas of the Chosen People and the Promised Land from the Old Testament.88

In these early publications, Kuyper had called the Jews a nation within the nation, implicitly portraying them as tending towards self-imposed segregation and not fully

⁸⁷ Poorthuis and Salemink, Een donkere spiegel, 253–64.

⁸⁸ A. Kuyper, *Liberalisten en Joden* (Amsterdam, 1878), originally a series of articles in *De Standaard*, 11, 14, 16, 17, 18 and 21 Oct. 1878. I. Schöffer, 'Abraham Kuyper and the Jews', in id., *Veelvormig verleden: Zeventien studies in de vaderlandsegeschiedenis* (Amsterdam, 1987), 159–70; and Hofmeester, 'Antisemitismus'.

participating in the Dutch nation.89 That brings us to a different variety of antisemitism also found in the Netherlands, which was rooted in the perception of Jews as strangers: an antisemitism that was social in the broad sense, including political and economic aspects. As a people—sometimes the term 'race' was employed, but without any specific biological meaning—the Jews were said to have certain traits, some good but most bad, which they were largely or wholly incapable of overcoming, because such traits were inherent in their origins. This basic belief underlay all sorts of stereotypes, such as that of the Jewish usurer or his modern counterpart the capitalist, or that of the Bolshevik who was a deadly threat to society. Both stereotypes suggested unreliability in general and, considering the international nature of capitalism and bolshevism, disloyalty to the nation in particular. They usually took a tempered form, especially in the Netherlands, such as the widespread notion that you had to watch out when doing business with joodjes (a diminutive term roughly equivalent to 'kikes'). In many Dutch expressions, jood ('Jew') or joods ('Jewish') had a deprecatory meaning; examples include jodenstreek (literally 'Jewish trick', used for any nasty trick) and brillenjood ('spectacles Jew', a term of abuse for anyone who wore spectacles). Expressions of anti-Jewish feelings and stereotypes (antisemitism), such as these, were referred to in Jewish circles as risjes (from the Yiddish). Many Jews were aware of the problem, and they not infrequently tried to modify their behaviour to avoid such reactions. In other cases, they ignored anti-Jewish remarks or pretended not to notice them. In exceptional cases, they openly protested.

It was mainly this form of antisemitism, based on stereotypes and regarding Jews as a separate people, that was widespread throughout the period described in this chapter, although it did not usually take extreme forms. Its expressions were generally accompanied by emphatic assurances that the speaker was no antisemite, and disparaging remarks about Jews tended to go hand in hand with statements of great admiration, equally stereotypical in nature, for the many impressive achievements through the years by Jews in various fields: clever doctors and lawyers, talented violinists, gifted entertainers, and great businesspeople. These would be followed by the warning that it was crucial to prevent Jews from acquiring too much influence. One example of this attitude was the above-mentioned 'aldermen affair' in Amsterdam. Organizations generally tried to avoid being seen as Jewish simply because they had a relatively large number of prominent Jewish members. Another way of toning down antisemitic statements was by asserting that the Jews in the Netherlands were no problem, but that things were different abroad—so it was important to remain vigilant. In that light, the 'nationalization' of Dutch Jewry and the absence of a large group of Jews who differed

⁸⁹ Series of articles under the title of 'De joden onder de Christen-natiën' in the daily newspaper *De Standaard*, 8, 11, 12, 13 and 14 Oct. 1875. H. Blom, 'Species hollandia judaica', in R. Ensel (ed.), *Sjacheren met stereotypen: Essays over 'De Jood' als sjabloon* (collection marking the retirement of Evelien Gans as a professor) (Amsterdam, 2016), 19–23.

in appearance and behaviour (since the clearly identifiable Jews from eastern Europe remained small in number) were important factors behind the relative mildness, generally speaking, of anti-Jewish sentiments in the Netherlands until 1940.

One clear example of the impact stereotyping could have on Jewish politicians and public administrators is the difficulty experienced by Wertheim, despite his very respectable social position, in being elected to the Senate. The events in question unfolded at a time when the notorious fraudulent bankruptcy of Lodewijk Pincoffs, a Jewish businessman from Rotterdam who had theretofore been distinguished and successful, was still fresh in the public memory. In 1877 that so-called financial genius had even been offered the post of finance minister in the liberal Kappeyne van de Coppello government, an offer he had declined. In 1879 Pincoffs's fraud came to light and he fled to America. The outrage about this affair led to a shift in the public attitude towards not only Pincoffs, but Jews in general. This probably formed a temporary obstacle to Wertheim's candidacy for the provincial legislature of North Holland, to which he was not elected until 1886. Once a member of the national parliament, he responded caustically to the suggestion, in 1891, that he should be thankful for the hospitality offered to Jews by the Christian Netherlands: 'I do not serve in the States General as a Jew or for the Jews. My whole history shows that I neither recognize nor make any distinction between different religious groups.' It was not (or no longer) a question of hospitality, he added: 'You and I are both citizens of the State, with equal rights and duties.'90

Another effect of social discrimination was that many households excluded Jews, or at least kept them at some distance, from their private and domestic life, consciously choosing not to have Jewish friends and not to allow their children's Jewish playmates into their homes. This is illustrated by a letter to a friend from Mrs Anna Mees, wife of the Rotterdam banker Marten Mees, in which she apologized for having had to converse with Mrs Pincoffs for a fairly long time at a dinner party. The letter makes it clear that the Mees family would have preferred to keep the Jewish Pincoffs out of their private lives but saw no way of avoiding occasional, informal social contact with a business associate. Jews were also sometimes the target of jeers and verbal abuse in the street. It is in this context that we should see the blackballing of Jews from certain private associations, such as the Groote Club in Amsterdam and some student societies and sports clubs, and the barring of Jews from particular places that were open to the general public, such as certain dance halls and restaurants. The Jewish press reported such incidents with some regularity. The phenomenon is related to the reluctance noted above to appoint Jews to positions where they would represent the nation as a

⁹⁰ Quoted in Rijxman, *A. C. Wertheim*, 282; for Pincoffs, see also J. Jonker, 'In het middelpunt en toch aan de rand: Joodse bankiers en effectenhandelaren, 1815–1940', in Berg et al. (eds.), *Venter*, 92–113, and B. Oosterwijk, *Ik verlang geen dank: Lodewijk Pincoffs* 1827–1911 (Rotterdam, 2012).

⁹¹ Quispel, Anti-Joodse beeldvorming, 214.

whole. This type of reluctance did not tend to be openly expressed, but behind the scenes, candidates' Jewish origins were sometimes a topic of serious discussion. For instance, the correspondence between the foreign minister Andries Cornelis Dirk de Graeff and Johan Paul van Limburg Stirum, envoy of the Netherlands in Berlin, shows that in 1935 the idea was briefly entertained of a ministerial post for Abraham Carel Josephus Jitta, professor and editor-in-chief of the current affairs weekly *De Groene Amsterdammer*. The objection was made that this would be seen as a provocation by the Dutch Nazi party, the NSB, 'because Jitta is an observant Israelite'. De Graeff himself regarded 'Jitta's Jewishness as an advantage in this context'. 92

In a sense, these forms of antisemitism, rooted in religious and social stereotypes of the Jewish people, can be regarded as fairly 'normal' forms of discrimination and prejudice, such as are found in all societies and have the greatest impact on small minorities. They seem similar in some ways to anti-popery and anti-socialism, which also played a quite distinct role in Dutch society over a long period. Yet Catholics and socialists were much larger minorities, and more importantly, these identities were seen as choices that could, in principle, be reconsidered. Most people did not believe that the same thing was true of the Jews; membership in a people or nation, they felt, could not be shaken off so easily. That belief, in an even stronger form, also played a role in another form of antisemitism, which emerged in the nineteenth century and became sharply defined in the first half of the twentieth century—an antisemitism grounded in racial ideologies and applied to the political domain. This variety replaced references to the Jewish people with a scientific or semi-scientific terminology of races, in which the Jews were deemed inferior. This type of antisemitism did have a mild form, in which the fashionable new vocabulary of social Darwinism was used for an older phenomenon, and in which the notion of Jewish inferiority was not emphasized. But that form laid the groundwork for a much more thoroughgoing and fundamental variety of antisemitism, which took on explicit political significance. This racist antisemitism assumed rabid and bloodthirsty forms, especially in the national socialist movement that came to power in Germany in the 1930s. It also won adherents in the Netherlands, most significantly in the form of the NSB party (Nationaalsocialistische Beweging; National Socialist Movement), although not all national socialists were fervent supporters of the movement's antisemitism. This very virulent, manifest form of antisemitism, horrifying examples of which could be witnessed in Germany, also met with especially strong objections in the Netherlands and with emphatic opposition for a variety of reasons.93 There were challenges on Christian grounds to Nazi ideology, which was seen as heathen. In the political sphere, the need for tolerance and the

⁹² W. J. M. Klaassen (ed.), 'Voor u persoonlijk': Brieven van minister van buitenlandse zaken, jhr. A. C. D. de Graeff aan gezant J. P. van Limburg Stirum (1933–1937) (The Hague, 1986), 98.

⁹³ For the response in the Dutch press, see F. van Vree, *De Nederlandse Pers en Duitsland 1930–1939: Een studie over de publieke opinie* (Groningen, 1989).

principle that all people are equal, or deserve equal treatment, were articulated with great force.

In summary, no matter how individuals of Jewish descent and/or background behaved—no matter how nationally oriented, emancipated, acculturated, and even assimilated they were—they were usually recognized as Jews in one way or another, even if they did not wish to be, and kept at a certain distance, regarded as different. This does not seem to have led to a prevalent feeling of insecurity among the Jewish minority in the Netherlands. Some saw the position of Jews in the country as a privileged one, and in the 1930s many refugees believed themselves safe in the Netherlands. But that very consciousness of 'privilege' involved an implicit sense of threat, as did the emphasis on helping Jewish refugees from eastern Europe to travel on as quickly as possible, because their 'foreignness' might provoke antisemitism. Furthermore, the European context posed a threat to Jews in many respects. This threat escalated in the 1930s, as discussed below. Yet well before then, a new type of Jewish consciousness came into being that played a role in the Netherlands and has thus far been mentioned only in passing: Zionism.

Solidarity with International Jewry and Zionism

Throughout the diaspora, Jewish communities and most individual Jews harboured special feelings for the Land of the Forefathers, the Holy Land, or whatever name they called it. These feelings were especially strong in the religious context, where a return to 'the Promised Land' was anticipated after the coming of the messiah, but they were shared even by people of Jewish ancestry with weak or severed ties to the Jewish religion. After 1809, this continual sense of connection to the Holy Land found expression through the founding, in Amsterdam, of the Pekidim and Amarcalim, in which the Orthodox Lehren family played a central role. The awareness of belonging to a group scattered all over the world, which had originated in Palestine, was reinforced and kept alive by feelings of solidarity in response to the persecution of Jews and to antisemitism, which surfaced repeatedly and in many different forms. The Alliance Israélite Universelle, founded in Paris in 1860, was a modern organization for promoting international Jewish solidarity without any special emphasis on Palestine. This organization, too, was active in the Netherlands. In the decades around 1900, the pogroms in eastern Europe drew the most attention, but most Dutch Jews were also aware of antisemitism in countries such as Germany, Austria, and France. These forms of persecution inspired initiatives and organizations throughout Europe to offer philanthropic aid and mutual support.94

⁹⁴ For the background to the Pekidim, the Lehren brothers, and the Alliance Israélite Universelle, see also Ch. *6* above.

Support for refugees was motivated not only by human kindness towards the victims of pogroms and antisemitism, but also by the wish to avoid negative effects on the position of Jews who had deeper roots in the Netherlands. It was feared that the settlement of large groups of Jewish refugees, who might have very different ways of life that would attract attention, could lead to the growth of antisemitism in the Netherlands. Much of this support therefore focused on encouraging the onward migration of Jewish refugees who arrived in the Netherlands. The first Dutch association for aid to such refugees, Montefiore, founded in 1883, mainly supported Jews from eastern Europe in Rotterdam. Whenever pogroms led to new waves of refugees, new committees and organizations were formed, whose members sometimes included non-Jews. They housed the refugees in *passantenasiels* ('shelters for transients') and helped them to travel onward. Thanks to these efforts, settlement by eastern European Jews remained limited, as mentioned above, and it was not until after the First World War that Jews from eastern Europe established a few small communities in the Netherlands.

The powerful new waves of antisemitism in the second half of the nineteenth century also led to the birth of Zionism. This unprecedented and in many ways revolutionary phenomenon—the pursuit of a Jewish state in Palestine—was based on the conviction that complete integration into the modern nation-states was impossible, because of ineradicable antisemitism. It was also in harmony with the political thinking of the time, dominated by the idea of nations and nation-states. Conditions in the Netherlands were not especially favourable to the spread of Zionism at first. Antisemitism was relatively weak, and Dutch Jews were highly acculturated in daily life and were being rapidly integrated into Dutch society, without giving up their separate Jewish religious life. Jews hardly felt threatened, if at all, in the Netherlands. But throughout the country, Jews were inspired by the new Zionist cause, and numerous Zionist organizations popped up that were affiliated with the world-wide movement. The central association was the Nederlandse Zionistenbond (Dutch Zionist League; NZB), established in 1899, shortly after the publication of Theodor Herzl's influential Zionist tract Der Judenstaat in 1896 and the First Zionist Congress in 1897. Three people were of great importance in the founding of the NZB: the banker Jacobus Henricus Kann, who had attended the congress in Basel in 1897 with his brother and since then had played a pivotal role in Dutch and international Zionism; Chief Rabbi Dünner, who was sympathetic to Zionism despite its predominant rejection in Orthodox circles; and the poet Abraham Eliazer van Collem, the first president of the NZB, who abandoned Zionism soon afterwards.95

⁹⁵ L. Giebels, *De zionistische beweging in Nederland* 1899–1941 (Assen, 1975) and R. M. Hoogewoud-Verschoor, "Met dubbeltjes en busjes": Een overzicht van de zionistische beweging in Nederland tussen 1899 en 1948', in A. G. Hoekema and P. Post (eds.), *Frits Kuiper* (1898–1974): *Voordrachten en getuigenissen over Kuiper en een selectie van zijn brieven* (Hilversum, 2016), 53–60.

Over time the NZB expanded into a small complex of organizations and institutions that were formally or informally interrelated, such as the Zionist newspaper *De Joodsche Wachter*, published from 1905 onward. A separate student association was founded in 1908 (the Nederlandsche Zionistische Studentenorganisatie; NZSO) and a general youth organization in 1920 (the Joodsche Jeugd Federatie; JJF). In the 1930s, Lion Nordheim was a leading figure in this circle. There were also associations, founded in the 1920s, that were dedicated to paving the way for migration to Palestine. And of course the international Jewish National Fund (JNF), which raised funds for settlement in Palestine, had a Dutch division (formed in 1902). During the First World War, its main office was in fact temporarily located in The Hague. Another noteworthy fact is that the Jewish Territorial Organization (ITO), which did not link the desire for a Jewish homeland exclusively to Palestine, also had a division in the Netherlands.

The membership of the NZB and the related organizations remained limited. When it was founded in 1899, there were thirty-five members, and a year later this figure had risen to 214. The growth of the organization was encouraged by the fact that the eighth World Zionist Congress took place in The Hague in 1907. The establishment of the NZSO was probably connected to that event, and the number of NZB members increased, reaching about 1,200 by 1920. This was not really such a small figure compared to the Dutch membership of the non-Zionist Alliance Israélite (around 1,600 in 1916) or of the ITO (approximately 1,200 in 1914). In the 1930s, events in Germany led to a new wave of growth for the NZB, from 2,094 members in 1932 to 4,246 in 1939. The relatively small size of the NZB was, of course, in part a reflection of the abovementioned circumstances in the Netherlands, which were not very favourable to the growth of Zionism until some time in the 1930s. Many people in the Netherlands, probably including many NZB members, saw Zionism as a way to help other, non-Dutch Jews to escape their dire circumstances—in other words, as a form of philanthropy. A crucial role seems to have been played by the powerful forces in the Netherlands that explicitly opposed Zionism. That led to an ideological battle waged primarily in periodicals and a flurry of pamphlets.

In Orthodox Jewish circles, Zionism was largely rejected for many years. This position was supported by religious arguments; for example, it was questionable whether Jews were permitted to return to the Holy Land before the arrival of the messiah. But it was the highly secular nature of Zionism that was most offensive to Orthodox Jews. Internationally, Zionism had started out as a deliberate response on the part of secular Jews to the persistence of antisemitism even after the generally acclaimed legal emancipation of Jews. In the Netherlands, it was mainly the members of the Jewish bourgeoisie, who had wandered fairly far from Orthodox Judaism, who set the tone in the movement. That was not an ideological necessity; Zionism certainly could be placed on religious foundations, and in other countries it was, at an early stage. The Mizrachi movement, which envisaged a new Jewish homeland based on Orthodox principles,

dated from 1902. Dünner, who was involved in the formation of the NZB in 1899, encapsulated the basic Mizrachi position in 1905 in his foreword to a polemical brochure by Simon Philip de Vries, a Haarlem rabbi who was a dedicated and active leader of the movement: 'the Zionist ambition is not only unobjectionable; it is even, in the noblest sense of the word, a religious act—yes, even a religious duty'. ⁹⁶ In the Netherlands, Mizrachi was permitted to form its own separate division of the NZB in 1911, and a youth association with the same ideology, Zichron Ja'akov, was set up in 1917 and later showed very radical tendencies.

Among the Orthodox Jews in the Netherlands, the Zionists were a fairly small minority. They had much less influence than the international organization Agudas Yisroel, which was primarily religious and, for religious reasons, fundamentally anti-Zionist. In 1904 the Assembly of Chief Rabbis—not attended by Dünner, as mentioned above—declared itself firmly opposed to Zionism. The fiercest opponents included the chief rabbi of Gelderland, Lion Wagenaar, who contended with De Vries in pamphlets. In support of his anti-Zionist beliefs, he had printed under the title of his pamphlet: 'Published for the benefit of the poor of the Holy Land'. '7 Onderwijzer, chief rabbi in Amsterdam from 1917 to 1934, also repeatedly censured the Zionist movement. Under the influence of events in Europe in the 1930s, this anti-Zionism largely vanished or even transformed into its opposite. In 1936 Lodewijk Hartog Sarlouis could not obtain an appointment as chief rabbi in Amsterdam until he had pledged not to oppose Zionism. As noted above, Levie Staal, the editor-in-chief of the NIW, had to give up his position at the newspaper in 1938 in connection with his negative attitude towards Zionism.

The objections to Zionism came not only from Orthodox Jews. Those whose convictions led them to strive for full acceptance in society as it was, who felt Dutch above all else and wished to be recognized as such, complained that the Jewish nationalism of the Zionists was unfaithful to society. The Zionists absolutely denied any lack of loyalty to the Dutch state. And in fact, there was little if any friction between their Dutch nationality and their Zionism, especially for those who in practice saw Zionism mainly as a way of opening up opportunities for people persecuted elsewhere. But in more radical circles, such friction was not denied in the 1930s, and there really was a degree of distancing from Dutch society. As Lion Nordheim put it: 'We regard our life here in the Netherlands as an emergency situation, which we would like to bring to an end as quickly as possible.'98 The term assimilant ('assimilator') became

⁹⁶ Maaneh Le-Zion: Een betoog voor het Zionisme van joodsch-traditioneel standpunt, by 'S.Ph. de Vries Mzn, Rabbijn te Haarlem'. Introduction by 'den Weleerw. Zeer Gel. Heer Dr. J. H. Dünner, Opperrabbijn te Amsterdam' (Haarlem, 1905).

⁹⁷ Lemaan Tsion: Open schrijven aan mijnen geachten Vriend en Oud-Leerling, den Eerw. Heer S.Ph. de Vries, Rabbijn bij de Nederl. Israëlit. Gemeente te Haarlem, by 'L. Wagenaar, Opperrabbijn te Arnhem' (The Hague, 1905).

⁹⁸ Quoted in R. M. M. Hoogewoud-Verschoor, Lion: Een biografische schets van Lion Nordheim (1910–1945) en een keuze uit zijn artikelen (Jerusalem, 1995), 22.

highly loaded and derogatory in this context and could, interestingly enough, be applied both to highly secularized Jews, who thus dissociated themselves from Judaism, as it were, and to people living as devout Jews whose outward conduct outside the synagogue and the home was very much adapted to the norms of Dutch society. In this context, Evelien Gans has evoked the image of the Judas kiss.⁹⁹

Jews who had made a conscious choice to embrace socialism, and hence chose not to see each other exclusively or mainly as Jews, also had their objections and uncertainties. Many of them were opposed in theory to placing such emphasis on the national state and thus obscuring the very real contrasts between classes. Instead, the only possible solution they saw to the problem of antisemitism and persecution was the achievement of socialism, which was internationalist by nature. Focusing attention and energy on founding a Jewish nation-state would take them not closer to their ultimate objective, but further from it. Given this objection, it is not surprising that the NZB organization was in fact dominated by the bourgeoisie.

All the same, there were socialist Zionists, who wanted the Jewish state to be socialist in character. At the world congress in The Hague in 1907, they founded the international movement Poale Zion, which then had great difficulty in setting up a branch in the Netherlands. After failed attempts in 1912 and 1920, they finally succeeded in 1933; the new branch, which would never have a large membership, was admitted to the NZB on the same basis as Mizrachi. Major Zionist socialists included the abovementioned economists Salomon Kleerekoper and Sam de Wolff. Asser Benjamin Kleerekoper, a well-known journalist at the social democratic daily *Het Volk*, harboured strong Zionist sympathies in the early twentieth century and played a role in the NZB, but soon left the movement. Still other socialists showed some appreciation of the movement, but without becoming Zionists themselves, let alone joining Zionist organizations. One such case was Henri Polak. We have seen that socialism, Judaism, and Zionism could be interrelated in many different ways, a situation further complicated, in the case of social democrats, by an increasing orientation towards Dutchness. 100

Besides the interplay of Orthodox, nationalist, liberal, and socialist forces, however, there was also sympathy for the Zionist cause, although that sentiment did not necessarily lead to membership of Zionist organizations or complete acceptance of Zionist ideology. In many cases, such sympathy was inspired by philanthropic motives, feelings of solidarity with persecuted people in other countries, and a more general sense of solidarity with international Jewry. In the absence of a firm commitment to the movement, such positive feelings prompted actions such as financial support. The Jewish National Fund (JNF), in which the very gifted financier Nehemia de Lieme played a

⁹⁹ Gans, De kleine verschillen, 29–33.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid. See also E. Gans, 'Are Zionist Socialists Bad Socialists? A 1929 Amsterdam Left-Wing Polemic about Zionism', *DJH* iii. 321–38.

major role, sometimes received donations from people who did not belong to Zionist organizations. The success of the JNF was due in part to its success in encouraging Jews of fairly modest means to make little donations (by saving small change in blue collection boxes) and thus to become co-owners, in a sense, of land in Palestine. In 1920 a separate organization for financial support was established, which was, by design, not directly connected to Zionism as a political movement. This Palestina Opbouw Fonds (Palestine Development Fund, also known as Keren haYesod) had a more elite character; its members included leading Dutch Jews who were not Zionists by any means, such as the industrialist Samuel van den Bergh, the social democrat Henri Polak, and the judge Lodewijk Visser. In 1922 it was joined by the Joodsche Vrouwenvereeniging voor Practisch Palestinawerk (Jewish Women's Organization for Practical Palestine Work), which had around 2,000 members by the late 1930s. This association, in which Ella Edersheim-Levenbach and Caroline Wijsenbeek-Franken played a leading role, entered into a federation with the Women's International Zionist Organization (WIZO). Its membership showed a good deal of overlap with that of the above-mentioned Joodsche Vrouwenraad.

The most conspicuous example of the wider influence of Zionist ideology was a large congress held in the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam on 17 February 1918 to show support for 'Jewish demands'. This was a joint initiative of the Alliance Israélite, the ITO, and the NZB—an exceptional fact in itself. In the early stages, the International Jewish Emigration Committee, which was active in the Netherlands, was also involved in the preparations. The aim of the event was to lend strength to certain demands in the upcoming peace negotiations: civil rights for Jews around the world, special minority rights for Jews in eastern Europe, and—the foremost Zionist demand—the right of Jews to migrate to Palestine. The participants called on the Dutch government to support these wishes. A petition that followed the congress received 46,578 signatures, a remarkably high number (an estimated 70 per cent of the adult Jewish population), especially considering the traditional reluctance to present specifically Jewish demands to the world at large. Although this was not purely an initiative of the Zionists, they did take the lead, sometimes to the irritation of the other parties involved. What was most significant was that the Zionist objective was included so emphatically in the set of demands. Incidentally, this did not lead to a growth in the membership of the Zionist organizations. In everyday practice, the Zionists remained a small, though active, group. Nevertheless, this short-lived congress movement, whose success was rooted mainly in indignation about the waves of antisemitism in eastern Europe at the time, is an indication that sympathy for Zionism can by no means be gauged solely by the membership figures of the organizations involved. 101

For the Zionists themselves, the everyday operations of the NZB and associated

¹⁰¹ See also J. Michman, 'The Jewish Essence of Dutch Jewry', *DJH* ii. 1–22: 12–21. Michman believes that Zionism had a considerably larger number of supporters than is generally assumed to be the case.

organizations were generally complicated and sometimes laborious. This had to do not only with a shortage of human resources but also with internal dissension and problems with organizing aliyah, migration to Palestine. Dissension was present in many varieties. For one thing, the different strands of Zionism each developed their own separate institutions. Both the Orthodox and socialist movements took organizational form partly inside and partly outside the NZB (in Mizrachi and Poale Zion). The other currents within the global movement, which sometimes had quite tense mutual relations, also had a separate division within the NZB. The supporters of radical revisionism, who opposed any concessions to England, the administering power of the Mandate of Palestine from 1920 onwards, were very briefly affiliated with the NZB as a distinct group. They operated mainly outside that organization.

The NZB's internal differentiation did not make its smooth operation any easier, although as a unified entity, it was better able to take meaningful action than the federations commonly found elsewhere. There were also occasional internal disagreements about how to approach the refugee issue. Did refugees have the highest priority as future residents and trailblazers of the new Jewish state, or did they have impure motives, and was ideological conviction the main criterion? The relationship between theory and practice, between idealism and businesslike pragmatism, could also lead to difficulties. Should the organization start by securing its political objectives, while avoiding financial and other risks? Or was it preferable to make the leap to Palestine, despite all the uncertainties, aided by a large dose of idealism? A final factor that could lead to irritation was personal relationships. Tensions sometimes ran particularly high between the NZB, which sought to maintain firm control in the Netherlands, and Dutch individuals who were active abroad outside the scope of the NZB's activities, such as Kann and De Lieme, who had more or less been elbowed out of the NZB.

All these complications did not change the great enthusiasm and idealism with which Dutch Zionists pursued their goal. Presidents such as De Lieme (1912–18), Albert van Raalte (1926–8), Fritz (later Peretz) Bernstein (1930–4), and Abel Herzberg (1934–9) each put their own stamp on the organization and the movement. Bernstein was probably the most influential of all and inspired many people to make aliyah. He was also influential in the intellectual, ideological sphere, in part as the author of *Der Antisemitismus als Gruppenerscheinung* (1926; translated into English as *Anti-Semitism as a Social Phenomenon*, 1951). He described his ideological position as 'unconditional Zionism'; this made it similar to revisionism in substantive terms, but he dissociated himself from that current for practical and socio-economic reasons. In 1936 he emigrated to Palestine, where he wielded considerable political influence: he was among the signatories of the declaration of independence in 1948 and became Israel's first Minister of Trade and Industry.

Chalutzim, or pioneers, from the Netherlands remained few in number. An estimated 1,600 Dutch nationals made aliyah in the period up to 1940. Because some of

them eventually returned, and some died of natural causes, there were around 1,000 Jews from the Netherlands in Palestine in 1940. The Netherlands was also a transit country for Jews from other places. Conditions in the Netherlands not only provided few incentives to emigrate but even presented certain obstacles. Once Palestine was under the British mandate, settlement there required a certificate. Since the Netherlands was not regarded as a high-priority country, few certificates were issued to people there. This led to long waiting lists in the 1930s. Few if any of the illegal migrants to Palestine were Dutch, aside from the famous case of the *Dora*, a ship—unofficially tolerated by the Dutch authorities—that carried 365 Jews, half of them Dutch, half of them refugees, to Palestine illegally in 1939. Potential new pioneers often lacked the means to build up a new life in Palestine, and those who had lives of relative security in the Netherlands were not inclined to try their luck in an unfamiliar country.

The opportunities for hakhsharah, preparation and training for aliyah, were limited. While not everyone who emigrated had made thorough preparations, that was generally considered desirable. There were special organizations that focused mainly on training pioneers in occupations that would be useful and necessary in the new state, usually in an ideologically charged atmosphere.

Special attention was devoted to agricultural occupations, very unfamiliar terrain for most Jews. A number of Dutch and foreign Jews, almost all young, received training on Dutch farms. The best-known organization in this area was the Vereniging tot Vakopleiding van Palestinapioniers (Association for the Professional Education of Palestine Pioneers), usually referred to as the Deventer Vereniging after the place where it was founded in 1918. Its central figures were the brothers Ru and Chi Cohen. Other hakhsharah organizations included a religious one associated with Mizrachi: Dath Wa'arets.

Many places on these training courses were filled by Jewish refugees from other countries. In the 1930s, a training camp especially for that group, and not exclusively for Zionists, was set up in Wieringermeer, an area of new land reclaimed from the Zuiderzee not long before (PLATE 60). This camp was an initiative of the Stichting Joodse Arbeid tot Opleiding van Joodse Uitgewekenen (Jewish Labour Foundation for the Education of Jewish Émigrés), which had been set up for that purpose in 1934 and worked hand in hand with the Comité voor Bijzondere Joodse Belangen (Committee for Special Jewish Interests; CBJB). An especially noteworthy contribution was made by George van den Bergh—a scion of the well-known family of margarine manufacturers who became a social democrat and was appointed as a professor in Amsterdam in 1936. At first, the NZB was not very well disposed towards the pioneers, who mostly came from abroad at that stage and tended to be fairly leftist. This attitude changed later, when some Dutch Jews became interested in emigrating.

C. Brasz, Irgoen Olei Holland, de ontstaansgeschiedenis van de Nederlandse immigrantenbeweging in Israel (Jerusalem, 1993); these figures at p. 12.
 C. Brasz, 'Dodenschip Dora', Vrij Nederland, 1 May 1993, pp. 38–41.

In the case of aliyah, again, it would be wrong to emphasize only the difficulties. The most defining characteristics of the Dutch chalutzim were their selfless idealism and the great enthusiasm with which they worked towards their goal of a Jewish nation-state, however uncertain that prospect may have seemed in the late 1930s. Some of them gave up relatively secure positions in the Netherlands. The first Dutch chalutz was Jac. Bing, who left the country in 1910; little else is known about him. In 1912 Siegfried Hoofiën emigrated with his family. As the director of the Anglo-Palestine Company and Dutch consul in Tel Aviv, he played an important role in Palestine. Something similar applies to the Kann family, who settled in Jerusalem in the 1920s. Although Jacobus Kann returned to the Netherlands, he visited Palestine a number of times afterwards and continued to make an important contribution as a financial expert and a major investor in the development of Jewish settlements in Palestine, especially Tel Aviv. Other noteworthy names include Siegfried van Vriesland, Leib de Leeuw and his wife Mirjam Gerzon, and the aforementioned Fritz Bernstein, each of whom played a significant role either as a link to the Netherlands or in Palestine itself (and later in Israel).

So despite the low membership figures of Zionist organizations in the Netherlands, the movement had a conspicuous presence in the early twentieth century, as a new area of Jewish consciousness and activity. From about 1900 onwards, this Zionist current was part of the landscape of Jewish culture in the Netherlands, alongside Orthodox-influenced religious Judaism, traditional Jewish life, and the activities of Jews (often recognized as such) in liberal and socialist circles. Zionism also underscored the connections between Dutch and international (or perhaps transnational) Judaism, without necessarily clashing with the Dutchness of Jews in the Netherlands or with their position in the country. It is sometimes said that Dutch Jews lived in international isolation, but in the light of these facts, that belief does not appear tenable.

Refugees from Germany

In the 1930s Europe was hit by a profound economic and political crisis, which did not spare the Netherlands. The economic depression and its social effects (high unemployment and the impoverishment of small shopkeepers and tradespeople) made a deep impression, becoming the central political and social problem. The continent-wide political crisis—characterized by scepticism about the value, significance, and functionality of parliamentary democracy—although felt in the Netherlands, was considerably less severe than elsewhere in Europe. But developments in nearby countries were observed with anxiety and sometimes with dismay. In particular, international relations and events in the vitally important neighbouring country of Germany were topics of great attention and concern in the press. Many Jews in the Netherlands had a different perspective from the general population on the relative importance of the economic

and political crises. While they were just as hard hit by the economic crisis and its social consequences, they saw an equal or greater threat in events in Germany, in the violent, racist antisemitism and persecution taking place so close by. It struck at the heart of their Jewishness, called forth their sense of solidarity with Jews in other countries, confronted them—much more than other groups in the Netherlands—with the politics of the refugee crisis, and raised the question of whether and to what extent similar things could happen in the Netherlands, harming the relatively comfortable position of Dutch Jews and thus disrupting the integration process.

Although events in the Netherlands did not bring about a sudden, profound discontinuity in long-term processes in 1933, they did lead to a shift in the dynamic balance that characterized the position of Jews and Jewish groups in the Netherlands. Not all the changes were in the same direction. On the one hand, the processes of internal differentiation and integration into Dutch society continued, sometimes at a rapid pace. On the other hand, 'the Jews' became more closely involved with each other, were seen, more than before, as a distinct social group, and became more separate from non-Jews in some respects. The task of giving a balanced description and interpretation of all this is complicated by the fact that we know what happened to the Jews after the German invasion in May 1940. We now know that the outcome was the murder of the large majority of Jews in the Netherlands and throughout Europe. In the 1930s, this was as yet unknown and, despite all the phenomena that can be seen in retrospect as warning signs and all the manifestations of antisemitism around that time, it was truly unimaginable. Ivo Schöffer has rightly pointed out the consequent risk of exaggerating or at least distorting what happened in the Netherlands in the 1930s: 'If no war had come, then this rising tide of antisemitism would probably have ebbed away again. 104

In the Netherlands, the most visible consequences of events in Germany took the form of the refugee problem. After Hitler and the Nazis came to power in Germany in 1933, tens of thousands of refugees left the country and came to the Netherlands. Jews were not the only ones who fled, but they were without doubt the group in greatest danger in the Third Reich, and they formed the vast majority of refugees. After a relatively large influx in 1933, the greatest increases in number came after the Anschluss and Kristallnacht in 1938. The length of their stay in the Netherlands varied, but most left eventually. In May 1940, there were some 15,000 Jews with German nationality in the country. This surge of incoming refugees posed a serious problem for the government, especially in a time of economic difficulties and high unemployment. It is clear that the refugees received at best a lukewarm welcome, for all that the Dutch prided themselves on a tradition of hospitality and asylum, and however much those who tried to help were motivated by humanitarian feelings. Besides economic problems, other concerns were the costs of reception, relations with the all-important neighbouring country of

¹⁰⁴ I. Schöffer, 'Nederland en de Joden in de jaren dertig in historisch perspectief', in K. Dittrich and H. Würzner (eds.), *Nederland en het Duitse Exil 1933–1940* (Amsterdam, 1982), 79–92: 91.

Germany, and possible domestic political problems (refugees who were communists or political activists of any stripe were seen as risk factors). Furthermore, some of the competent authorities and their civil servants harboured some antisemitic feelings or at least were wary of 'foreign elements', a phrase that usually referred to Jews from eastern Europe.

The country did not have a great deal of recent experience with refugees. The smaller groups of Jewish refugees from eastern Europe who had been coming to the Netherlands since around 1880 had largely been sent onwards by special committees. The very large wave of Belgian refugees early in the First World War, which had included a small number of Jews, had not lasted long; most had returned swiftly, and few remained after the war. This time it did not seem, especially at the end of the decade, that the phenomenon would be short-lived. There was no real government policy on refugees in 1933, no clear set of guidelines. But after a brief exploratory period, such a policy did emerge. 105 Its main objective was to limit the influx as much as possible and keep the number of refugees in the Netherlands to a minimum. 'If the Jews now present are allowed to remain here, then it will become increasingly onerous to get rid of them', the justice minister wrote in October 1933, in a letter to the cabinet prompted by the growing inrush of Jewish refugees. 106 In 1934 a series of measures was taken on border control, policing, expulsion from the country, and work permits. That same year, two articles were added to the Dutch Criminal Code (Wetboek van Strafrecht), making it a criminal offence to insult an ethnic group; the stated purpose was to protect 'Israelite fellow citizens' in particular, because such insults had become 'epidemic' throughout Europe, including the Netherlands, and beyond. The underlying objective was to maintain public order. Antisemitic statements had already led to local breaches of the peace. 107 But refugee policy certainly did not focus on Jews exclusively; the fear of radical communist and other leftist 'elements' also ran deep.

Further measures were taken in 1938; many refugees, some Jewish, were turned away at the border as 'undesirable aliens', and a quota system was developed. This approach was largely supported by Parliament, over protests from within the Jewish community and by other groups. Despite substantial differences in the background and the practical details, the Dutch stance did not fundamentally differ from that of

¹⁰⁵ B. Moore, Refugees from Nazi Germany in the Netherlands, 1933–1940 (Dordrecht, 1986); M. Leenders, Ongenode gasten: Van traditioneel asielrecht naar immigratiebeleid, 1815–1938 (Hilversum, 1993); C. van Eijl, Al te goed is buurmans gek: Het Nederlandse vluchtelingenbeleid 1840–1940 (Amsterdam, 2005); F. Caestecker and B. Moore (eds.), Refugees from Nazi Germany and the Liberal European States (New York, 2010).

¹⁰⁶ Quoted in L. de Jong, Het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden in de Tweede Wereldoorlog, 14 vols. (The Hague, 1969–91), vol. i: Voorspel, 497, and in Van Eijl, Al te goed is buurmans gek, 184.

¹⁰⁷ R. Ensel and E. Gans, 'The Bystander as a Non-Jew', paper delivered at the conference 'Probing the Limits of Categorization: The "Bystander" in Holocaust History', September 2015; M. van Noorloos, *Hate Speech Revisited: A Comparative and Historical Perspective on Hate Speech Law in the Netherlands and England & Wales* (Cambridge, 2011), 197.

other western European states. This policy did not prevent a swift rise in the number of refugees, at the very time when the most restrictive measures were in force. Many refugees were in the Netherlands illegally. Those who were discovered became the first to be interned in special camps. Later, refugees who had been officially admitted and were legally present were also sent to those camps. This was intended as not only a solution to the housing problem but also an attempt to prevent the further disruption of the labour market, a much-feared outcome.

The government did not see itself as primarily responsible for accommodating the refugees and had no specific budget for this task, which had traditionally fallen within the remit of private initiatives. Accordingly, Jewish refugees were seen—both in Jewish circles and elsewhere—as the special concern of the Jews, although others might sometimes make occasional contributions for humanitarian reasons. In the 1930s, this job was tackled by the above-mentioned CBJB, established in 1933, the closely related Comité voor Joodse Vluchtelingen (Committee for Jewish Refugees; CJV), and a number of local committees. They played a dominant role in refugee aid, because most of the refugees were Jewish. Compared to them, committees for other groups were insignificant.

The pivotal figure on these committees, driving and directing their work, was the energetic Amsterdam professor of ancient history David Cohen. 108 His way of life was very much that of the refined upper middle class, and he played an integral part in social and cultural life. At the same time, he felt strongly tied to the Jewish community and was a confirmed Zionist. He had been an active participant in assistance efforts for Jewish refugees during the First World War and in the 1920s. He persuaded his friend Abraham Asscher of the need for the Dutch Jewish community to establish a committee to find an effective non-violent response to the threat posed by events in Germany, and to accommodate the refugees. Asscher, the owner of Amsterdam's best-known diamond company and a leading liberal politician, was the board president of the NIK at the time. He played a role similar to Wertheim's in the late nineteenth century, although he was neither as culturally engaged nor as secularized. Cohen was also a member of the NIK's Permanent Commission. The refugee committees were thus directly linked to the largest Jewish denomination through their leaders. Asscher presided over the board of the CBJB and Cohen over the secretariat. The other members of the CBJB also belonged to the Jewish elite; they included Samuel van den Bergh, Josephus Jitta, and Visser. It is probably no coincidence that the CBJB did not include a rabbi or a leading social democrat, although Chief Rabbi Onderwijzer and the social democrats Boekman and Henri Polak were members of its much larger Comité van Aanbeveling (Endorsing Committee, a collection of prominent figures who allowed their names to be associated with the organization for promotional purposes). The CBJB fitted neatly into the tradition of distinguished Jews acting on behalf of the entire

¹⁰⁸ P. Schrijvers, Rome, Athene, Jeruzalem: Leven en werk van prof. dr. David Cohen (Groningen, 2000).

Jewish population. Besides their philanthropic and general humanitarian motivations, they also aimed to ensure that the large numbers of Jewish refugees in the Netherlands would cause as little trouble as possible, and thus avoid stirring up the antisemitism that was surfacing in the country. They were determined to protect the relatively favourable position of the Jews in the Netherlands. To that end, they were often in formal or informal contact with the government, senior officials, and representatives of other elites, and they tried to influence public opinion.

The actual reception of Jewish refugees was the responsibility of the CJV, over which Cohen presided. The central roles in this committee were held by less socially prominent individuals such as Raphaël Henri Eitje, who had an Orthodox background, and Gertrude Van Tijn-Cohn, who came from Germany and was married to a Dutchman. 109 The more practical jobs included registering refugees and assisting in the administrative matters surrounding migration (passports, visas, work permits, and the like). The committee had the traditional goal of making it possible for as many people as possible to travel onwards. Fundraising was another important task. Alongside support from abroad (especially from the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee), substantial funds were raised in campaigns both in the Jewish community and in the Netherlands as a whole. A total of 6 million guilders was collected between 1933 and 1940. The projects set up for refugees included the aforementioned training camp in Wieringermeer. When growing numbers of legal and illegal immigrants made the housing problem more pressing, the committees set up a special reception camp in close consultation with the national authorities. The CBJB and CJV were primarily responsible for the camp's operation and financing. This camp opened its gates in Westerbork in 1939. In May 1940, there were around 750 Jewish refugees from Germany there.

The general response to the refugee problem and the activities of the CBJB and CJV reflected the ambivalent feelings in Jewish circles. On the one hand, Dutch Jews felt obliged to contribute—if not actively, then passively—out of a sense of Jewish solidarity, even though the refugees seemed quite foreign in other respects. On the other hand, there were also feelings of fear and loathing. The refugees could put the established Dutch Jewish community in danger, provoke antisemitism, weaken the Dutch character of Jewish life in the Netherlands, make it more difficult to solve the country's social and economic problems, and who could say what else? Some of these concerns and frustrations were shared more widely in Dutch society. In daily interaction with refugees, their foreignness could lead to uncomfortable situations. Since they came from other cultures, their customs, languages, and modes of behaviour could provoke strong reactions. It was not only Jews of eastern European origin who sometimes irritated their Dutch co-religionists; German Jews could be just as

¹⁰⁹ B. Wasserstein, Gertrude van Tijn en het lot van de Nederlandse Joden (Amsterdam, 2013).

trying, especially when they became actively involved in Jewish affairs—for instance, in a religious or Zionist context.

The fear of growing antisemitism was not unfounded. After all, anti-Jewish (antisemitic) sentiments had played a role in the Netherlands for centuries and were certainly not in decline. This fact was evident in debates about the refugee problem, whether public or among the relevant officials. Policy documents and reports repeatedly emphasized that most refugees were Jews, evoking stereotypes and sometimes using overtly antisemitic language. For example, an official wrote in a report on the eastern European Jews among the refugees that their 'ideas about private property and standard commercial practices' displayed a mentality that had to be recognized as 'a threat to public moral interests'. 110 Yet this attitude did not permeate government decision-making, and it would be wrong to describe Dutch government policy as fundamentally antisemitic. Likewise, antisemitism never really flourished in Dutch politics, although there were, for the first time, several racist antisemitic parties in the 1930s, which often had their own militias (weerkorpsen) that occasionally committed violent acts in public, especially in Amsterdam.¹¹¹ Some were openly antisemitic in their programmes and propaganda: two, both of which were explicitly named the Nationaal-Socialistische Nederlandsche Arbeiderspartij (National Socialist Dutch Labour Party), and a third, the Zwart Front (Black Front), a southern regional party.

However, none of those was able to win a seat in parliament, unlike the Nationaal-Socialistische Beweging (National Socialist Movement; NSB) led by Anton Mussert. The NSB's electoral successes in the mid-1930s are undeniable: 8 per cent of the vote in the provincial election of 1935 and 4 per cent in the elections for the Lower House of Parliament in 1937, a percentage maintained in the provincial election of 1939. Strikingly, the NSB was not openly antisemitic when founded in 1931 and even had a few Jewish members. In its early years, the party's propaganda emphasized national sentiment and strong central authority. But the NSB did, from the very start, belong to Europe's broad fascist and national socialist movement, with all its radical ideological tendencies. When, around 1935, the NSB settled into its new orientation towards German national socialism—until then, Italian fascism had clearly served as a model—its antisemitism, which had always been detectable, came more distinctly into the foreground. This was the first time it became an overt and significant factor in Dutch politics. In 1938 Mussert presented a plan to address 'the Jewish question' by establishing a Jewish National Home in Surinam, British Guyana, and French Guyana; many plans of this kind were aired around that time. It attracted almost no interest outside his party. 112

¹¹⁰ Quoted in De Jong, Voorspel, 505, and in Van Eijl, Al te goed is buurmans gek, 183.

¹¹¹ G. Broek, Weerkorpsen: Extreemrechtse strijdgroepen in Amsterdam, 1923–1942 (Amsterdam, 2014).

¹¹² For the early NSB, see R. te Slaa and E. Klijn, *De NSB: Ontstaan en opkomst van de Nationaal Socialistische Beweging, 1931–1935* (Amsterdam, 2009), intended as the first volume of a complete history of the NSB.

In general, the Dutch were revolted by this crude, violent form of antisemitism, the same variety on display in Germany. This led to a drop in support for the NSB after 1935, as all major political parties and most religious denominations spoke out against the movement either openly or in indirect terms. The most influential newspapers also turned against the party, usually in the course of rejecting national socialism more generally, either for reasons of political or religious principle and/or because of its un-Dutch character. 113 Under the auspices of a Comité van Waakzaamheid (Vigilance Committee) composed of artists and intellectuals, special brochures were published decrying national socialism and antisemitism. Also worthy of mention is the organization Eenheid Door Democratie (Unity through Democracy), aimed at spreading mass propaganda opposing both national socialism and communism. All these developments contributed to the belief among many Jews that the situation in the Netherlands would not get out of hand. Even so, some felt the need to vigorously protest what was happening in Germany, sometimes side by side with non-Jews, and to support 'Jewish interests' and the interests of Jews. Forms of protest ranged from the above-mentioned pamphleting and agitation in the press (Kleerekoper, Polak, Sluyser) to a few large-scale gatherings and demonstrations, including one in 1933 to protest the boycotting of Jewish shopkeepers in Germany, one in 1935 opposing the Nuremberg Laws (Apollohal in Amsterdam proved too small to accommodate the thousands of protesters), and one in 1938 in response to Kristallnacht. It was also in 1938 that the Stichting tot Verdediging van de Culturele en Maatschappelijke Rechten der Joden (Foundation for the Defence of the Cultural and Social Rights of Jews) was founded. Under the cover of this very small organization, a few individuals tried to train young Jews to use weapons, a harbinger of the later armed Jewish gangs in the occupied Netherlands.

In public debate, non-Jews usually stressed the exceptional intellectual, artistic, and other achievements of Jews in the Netherlands and in general. The tradition (whether real or imagined) of Dutch tolerance and hospitality, especially towards Jews, was also mentioned repeatedly. One noteworthy event was Crown Princess Juliana's unexpected visit, on her own initiative, to De Joodsche Invalide in 1938 (PLATE 58), just a few days before a visit to her in-laws in Nazi Germany. This was generally seen as an expression of a political stance and was deeply appreciated in Jewish circles.

The repudiation of aggressive antisemitism by most Dutch people and the emphasis on Jewish contributions to social and cultural life do not imply that the milder and subtler forms of discrimination against Jews disappeared in the Netherlands. The high-profile public debate about Jewish refugees, Jewish issues, the danger of importing a Jewish question, and Jews in general heightened public awareness of the presence of Jews in Dutch society and led to faster recognition of Jews as Jews, even when the

¹¹³ Van Vree, *De Nederlandse pers*. See also the wealth of documentation in J. Wekking, *Untersuchungen zur Rezeption der nationalsozialistischen Weltanschauung in den konfessionellen Periodika der Niederlande 1933–1940: Ein Beitrag zur komparatistischen Imagologie* (Amsterdam, 1990).

people so identified did not by any means see themselves primarily as Jewish. This new awareness led to a tendency, in the 1930s, for Jews to be treated, more than they previously had been, as a separate group that would always remain separate and to which one belonged by descent and not only because of one's religious beliefs. The result was an emphasis, often unintentional, on the distance between Jews and Dutch society. It would be an exaggeration to say that the Jews were pushed into isolation, but the limits of integration were redrawn—in part unconsciously and inadvertently—and became sharper and narrower.

The internal dynamics of the Jewish community in the Netherlands also showed the influence of the changing historical context. On the one hand, individuals became more aware of their own Jewishness and more strongly oriented towards Jewish culture, history, and problems, and towards other Jews. On the other hand, the Jewish population became more differentiated. First of all, it expanded to include a contingent that had until recently lived in other countries (mostly Germany and Austria) and represented a new variety of Jewish life in the Netherlands. Furthermore, Liberal Judaism established its own organization around this time, which was under strong British influence at first but later grew substantially because of immigration from Germany. Historical conditions also led to the further development of the Zionist movement than ever before. It is scarcely possible to measure the impact of the unifying and the differentiating factors with any precision and calculate a final balance.

Meanwhile, the influence of the presence of the Jewish refugees was not limited to Jewish circles. Those refugees were also active in society at large. Unless they acquired Dutch nationality (which they very rarely did), they were prohibited from becoming politically active, so they never entered the official political sphere. Yet in some political circles, they were at work behind the scenes: some well-established political ties in the international communist or socialist context became stronger. In the cultural sphere, certain refugees were in fact remarkably active or influential. The publishing houses Allert de Lange and Em. Querido published the work of refugee authors, some of whom had outstanding international reputations: about 200 titles in all. Most were German-language Exil-Literatur; many others were Dutch translations. Refugees had a more direct influence on Dutch culture in other ways, such as professorial appointments (Hugo Sinzheimer in the law faculty in Amsterdam and Martin Davids in papyrology in Leiden), the arrival of other scholars (such as the physicist Gerhart Wolfgang Rathenau at Philips), and the occasionally important role in Dutch film production and cabaret. Rudolf Nelson's cabaret, for example, featured artists such as Dora Gerson, Dora Paulsen, and Max Ehrlich, and Kurt Gerron performed in Willy Rosen's Cabaret der Prominenten (Cabaret of the Prominent).

In economic terms, as mentioned above, the dominant factor was the fear that refugees would make life more difficult for Dutch job-seekers. On the other hand, the entrepreneurial activities of refugees who had borrowed money or escaped with capital of their own actually created jobs. Research into this phenomenon was conducted at the time. A report from 1935 counted eighty-five businesses of this kind, with approximately 2,000 jobs held mostly by Dutch employees. Most such firms were in the textile industry, where Jews had traditionally been strongly represented. In 1937 there were around 450 such businesses, with 7,500 jobs. 114 Yet there were also shopkeepers and tradespeople who blamed their difficulties on 'foreign', Jewish competition.

Jewishness was habitually seen, more than it had been, as the central factor in personal identity. It is hard to say how far-reaching this tendency was. The course of events from May 1940 onwards makes it impossible to tell. Perhaps the trends of emancipation, acculturation, integration, and secularization, which had begun in 1796 and become so powerful after 1870, had reached their fundamental limits. It is also possible that this was a temporary obstacle that would have been overcome in time. In that case, the many different factors at play would eventually have led—as is often seen after waves of immigration—to more assimilation and integration, not less. But after the German invasion, the history of the Jews in the Netherlands took another very different turn—this one extraordinarily tragic.

Jews in the Dutch Colonies

In the Western colonies of Curaçao and Surinam, Jews had—after their early settlement there—played a social and economic role throughout Dutch colonial history. From the start, they had formed religious communities, whose way of life was strongly influenced by the colonies' slave society.

The situation in the East Indies was different.¹¹⁵ Very few Jews had ever been present there. Before the emancipation of 1796, when Dutch Jews were granted equal civil rights, there had been Jews working on Dutch East India Company (VOC) ships or enlisted as soldiers. Hardly any of them settled in 'the East' at that stage. After the emancipation the colonial administration was, in principle, open to all, and Jews from the Netherlands (and Europe more generally) did settle there, not only as civil servants but also as traders or employees of private businesses. This was mostly the result of the individual, career-focused decisions of Jews from the middle or upper echelons of society. They did not form Jewish congregations; for many years, they were too few in number, lived too far apart, and in most cases felt little desire for organized religious

¹¹⁴ B. Moore, 'Jewish Refugee Entrepreneurs and the Dutch Economy in the 1930s', *Immigrants and Minorities*, 9 (1990), 46–63.

¹¹⁵ The passage about the Dutch East Indies is based to a large extent on *Selamat Sjabbat: De onbekende geschiedenis van joden in Nederlands-Indië* (special issue of *Mispoge*, 27/4 (2014), published in connection with the exhibition of the same name at the Jewish Historical Museum in Amsterdam) and the works cited in it. An earlier brief survey is provided in L. Hirschel, 'Joden in Nederlandsch Indië', in *Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch-Indië*, vol. vi, supplement (The Hague, 1932), 183–5.

life. In some cases, their departure for the Indies was in fact a way of fleeing the traditional Jewish milieu.

For poorer Jews, the colonies were not the most obvious choice for escaping poverty. If they emigrated, it was usually to Britain or the Americas. The colonial army (the KNIL), however, was an option for some. The initial pay could be substantial, especially at the time of the Aceh War (1873–1904), offering some alleviation of their poverty. A letter to the editors of the *NIW*, sent from Semarang and published in 1876, commented that 'in the war zone in Aceh, Christian and Mohammedan military chaplains follow soldiers in order to encourage them when, as so often in their final moments, they feel the need for comforting words, but there are no Jewish chaplains. In some cases, Jewish soldiers in field hospitals and on the battlefield have died like barbarians, receiving no further assistance from the clergy as soon as they admitted to practising the Mosaic religion.' The originally Jewish but completely secularized anarchist Alexandre Cohen, who served in the KNIL from 1882 to 1886, raised very different objections, calling the KNIL 'a gang of bandits organized in a military fashion'. 117

There were more general concerns in the Netherlands about the absence of organized Jewish life in the East Indies, even after the numbers of Jews began slowly to rise in some cities. From the late nineteenth century onwards, Jews gradually made their way into practically all 'European' occupations, although they encountered occasional barriers, just as Jews did in the Netherlands. For example, the Javasche Bank, which was the bank of issue for the Dutch East Indies, and the Nederlands-Indische Handelsbank refused to employ Jews for many years. These 'European' Jews, who were full, active members of the colonial ruling class, felt little need for organized Jewish life or observance of religious laws. The few who did feel such a need had to organize meetings in their homes and sometimes hired venues to celebrate Jewish festivals.

No special ties were ever established with the close-knit community in Surabaya known as the Baghdadi Jews, who had their own Jewish congregation with a synagogue and were devoted to their Jewish laws and customs, which differed in some respects from those of European Jews. They had settled in many parts of Asia years earlier as traders from the Arab world. Because they were completely separate from the European Jews and had a completely different status in colonial society, they will not be discussed in greater detail here.

The numbers of Jews increased slightly after 1900 and then more rapidly in the 1930s with the arrival of refugees, mainly from Germany. Out of a total population of about 70 million, there were 290,000 Europeans and Eurasians (that is, people of mixed ancestry, part European and part Asian) in 1940, including 3,000 to 5,000 Jews. Ten years earlier, there had been only about 1,100. The 1920s and 1930s witnessed the gradual development of a somewhat more extensive Jewish life and a stronger connection to Jewish tradition, fuelled partly by Zionism. In the religious sphere, Isidore Hen appears

¹¹⁷ Quoted ibid. 36.

to have played the most central role. The rabbinate in the Netherlands had authorized him to perform marriage ceremonies and act as a *mohel*, or circumciser. Jews occasionally spent the holidays in Singapore, where Jewish life was more vibrant. Davida Simons-Posthumus offers a glimpse of a typical Jewish holiday in the Dutch East Indies in a sketch of her first Yom Kippur in Bandung in 1939. The evening before, she attended the important Day of Atonement service in a meeting room in the Theosophical Society lodge. There she saw 'a fair number of Jews in pith helmets, and one even wearing a tallit, but that was an *Ostjid* [an informal term from German for a Yiddish-speaking Jew from eastern Europe]; chattering ladies and excited children; men and women mingling . . . Of course, there was great interest in me: a new arrival, one who even went to "shul" on Yom Kippur!

A Jewish congregation was eventually formed in Surabaya (Plate 59), without a rabbi, but with a teacher of religion; and a Vereniging tot Behartiging van de Joodse Belangen in Nederlands-Indië (Association for the Promotion of Jewish Interests in the Dutch East Indies) was established, along with a Joodse Vereniging (Jewish Association) in Bandung. The Nederlands-Indische Zionisten Bond (Dutch East Indies Zionist Union) had a few branches there. From 1926 to 1942, the monthly *Erets yisra'el* was published by the Palestina Opbouw Fonds (Palestine Development Fund) in the Dutch East Indies, edited by Simon Isaac van Creveld. From 1929 onwards, there was a 'military clubroom' in Weltevreden near Batavia and a Joods Militair Tehuis (Jewish Soldiers' House) in Batavia itself. The non-denominational cemeteries in Batavia, Kuta Raja (Banda Aceh), Semarang, and Surabaya included demarcated Jewish sections, and individual Jewish graves can be found elsewhere in the archipelago.

Yet Jews who settled in the Dutch East Indies remained primarily 'individuals among the masses'. ¹²⁰ Within the European community, they seem to have occupied the higher echelons of colonial society, many of them in the awareness that this would be temporary, one stage in their career. Just as in the Netherlands, a few of them rose to prominence, such as S. J. Hirsch, vice president of the Hooggerechtshof (Supreme Court) from 1910 to 1919; Emanuel Ephraim Moresco, vice president of the Raad van Nederlands-Indië (Council for the Dutch East Indies) in 1922–3; Adriaan Synco Oppenheim and Jozef Emanuel Stokvis, both members of the Volksraad (People's Council); the economist Jacob van Gelderen; and the legal scholar and sociologist Willem Frederik Wertheim.

In Surinam, Jews had played a very important role in the early Dutch exploitation of the area. 121 From the beginning, there had been a Jewish congregation with a high

¹¹⁸ E. Nathan, The History of Jews in Singapore, 1830–1945 (Singapore, 1986), 171–7.

¹¹⁹ Quoted in Selamat Sjabbat, 53.

¹²⁰ S. Kalff, 'Joden in Oost- en West-Indië', *De Indische Gids*, 43 (1925), 699–715: 708.

¹²¹ There is no good general survey of the history of the Jews in Surinam that includes the period 1870–1940, but see W. Vink, 'Tussen kleur en halacha: De geschiedenis van een joodse gemeenschap in koloniaal

degree of autonomy. The plantation economy, based on slave labour, began to flourish in the seventeenth century. In the late eighteenth century it went into decline, never to recover. The abolition of slavery in 1863 was the death knell for this plantation economy. The Jewish congregation, which had been in close contact with Amsterdam's Jewish community and under its influence from the very start, became a formal part of the Dutch synagogal system in the nineteenth century. But its established traditions and distance from the Netherlands gave rise to a unique strain of Jewish life and therefore led to occasional friction over the approach to religious practice, for instance with Rabbi Mozes Juda Lewenstein (1856–64), sent from the Netherlands. When the Jewish denominations in the Netherlands were reorganized in 1870, the formal ties with Surinam were severed, but for the time being the informal ties endured.

Economic shifts led the Portuguese Jews in the colony to abandon the plantations and settle in the city (Paramaribo), where Ashkenazi Jews who had come from Amsterdam were also trying to build new lives. The two groups focused mainly on a variety of commercial activities, with varying success. Some prospered—thanks in part, perhaps, to their inherited family fortunes. A number of Jews obtained positions in the colonial administration and legal system. In 1890 an estimated 1,500 Jews made up 2 per cent of the total population but at least a third of the European elite, in which they were largely accepted as full members. The highest echelon did remain dominated by Christian Europeans, but on the whole the Jews were no worse off. Most belonged to the upper middle classes in a hierarchy determined largely by skin colour, in which the Creoles, descendants of enslaved people from Africa, made up the bottom layer, and a minority of mixed African and European descent formed the lower middle class. One noteworthy group were the descendants of white Jewish men and the black enslaved women they had taken as mistresses. The relationship between the Jewish community and this small group of mixed-ancestry people (known as kleurlingen, coloureds), who could to some extent be regarded as Jewish, was volatile and characterized by a 'striking combination of incorporation and exclusion'. 122

A relatively large number of Jews were among the largest taxpayers and were therefore permitted to vote in elections for the Koloniale Staten, the colonial assembly, formed in 1866. In 1891, 93 of the 275 voters were Jewish. Jews were elected to the Staten repeatedly and even regularly formed a majority. Despite the limited powers

Suriname', in J.-M. Cohen (ed.), Joden in de Cariben (Zutphen, 2015), 176–201. This book was published in connection with the exhibition of the same name at the Jewish Historical Museum in Amsterdam. See also W. Vink, Creole Jews: Negotiating Community in Colonial Suriname (Leiden, 2010) and the somewhat earlier work by R. van Lier, Samenleving in een grensgebied: Een sociaalhistorische studie van Suriname, 3rd edn. (Amsterdam, 1977). Information has also been drawn from entries in the Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch West-Indië (The Hague and Leiden, 1914–1917), Encyclopedie van Suriname (Amsterdam, 1977) and Encyclopedia Judaica (Jerusalem, 1972).

¹²² Vink, 'Tussen kleur', 183.

of the Koloniale Staten, it often became entangled in disputes with the governor and the colonial administration. In the years 1889-91, the situation escalated into a bitter conflict, which had been provoked by an uprising of black farmers in the Para district in 1889 but was just as much about the relationship between the governor and the States. 123 This conflict gave rise to highly antisemitic statements in sections of the Surinamese press and to the plundering of Jewish homes. In part, this was a manifestation of smouldering antisemitic sentiments and resentments relating to the relative wealth of the Jews in the colony, which was reflected by their leading role in the Staten; at the time of the conflict, ten out of thirteen members were Jewish. A major role was played by Maurits Adriaan de Savornin Lohman, the governor who arrived in 1890. An orthodox Protestant with little talent for public administration, he had expressed anti-Jewish attitudes in articles about the Talmud in 1888. He made serious tactical blunders in the conflict and, in doing little or nothing to dissociate himself from the antisemitic hate campaign, he confirmed the claims that he was an antisemite, accusations which had preceded his arrival because of the articles he had published in the Netherlands. The affair led to his swift departure in 1891 but also marked the loss of elite status for Jews in Surinam. This shift was caused mainly by growing economic troubles and a degree of improvement in the status of coloureds since the expansion of the electorate in 1901. There was a rise in emigration to Europe among the white elite (often remigration, and especially to the Netherlands) for the purpose of studying and embarking on a career there, a trend in which the Jewish population participated, motivated in part by the manifest antisemitism of 1890-1. The number of Jews in the 1920s is estimated to be somewhat more than 800.

In the religious sphere, a tendency had been apparent since the mid-nineteenth century to resist the *verkleuring* (literally 'colour change' or 'discolouration') of the Surinamese Jewish community. A more Orthodox policy, which was a result of intervention from the Netherlands and the fear of changing power relations after the abolition of slavery, led to renewed pressure to apply halakhah (religious laws), especially to the admission of new members. In 1887 the Ashkenazi congregation altered the rules for admission of 'free people and people belonging to the caste of slaves' (from 1841/2), imposing considerably stricter conditions for the admission of children, derived from religious laws. This more rigid application of Jewish law must be interpreted partly in the social context, in which there was a desire to preserve the centrality of skin colour in the social hierarchy, even though that desire could not be openly expressed.¹²⁴

Under pressure from the mother country, various attempts were made to merge the Ashkenazi and Sephardi congregations. These were unsuccessful at first, but in 1895

A detailed description and analysis of this conflict is provided in two articles by H. Ramsoedh: 'Politieke strijd, volksopstand en antisemitisme in Suriname omstreeks 1890', Tijdschrift voor Sociale Geschiedenis, 18 (1992), 497–501, and 'De joodse bevolkingsgroep in Suriname in de tweede helft van de negentiende eeuw', StR 27 (1993), 49–71.
124 Vink, 'Tussen kleur', 198–9.

by-laws were adopted constituting a single Jewish congregation in Surinam. Two years earlier, for the first time in a long while, a rabbi (always a difficult post to fill) had been appointed: Jacob Samuel de Roos. A teacher of religion had also been selected, with the obligation to provide free education if necessary. In 1939 Abraham Lopes Cardozo, educated at Ets Haim not long before, was appointed *hazan*. It appears that in the early decades of the twentieth century Jewish community life in Surinam experienced a kind of flowering under religious leaders trained in Amsterdam, which found expression partly in a small group of social and religious associations that existed alongside the denomination.

The Sephardi Jewish congregation in Curaçao also had a venerable tradition going back to the economic boom in the seventeenth century, ¹²⁵ but their economic power had been sharply reduced in the late eighteenth century. By the final years of the nineteenth century the group had shrunk to fewer than 1,000 people. The Jewish population fluctuated, partly because of varying levels of migration to and from the island—there was much interaction with other parts of the Caribbean region and with the United States of America—rising briefly to around 1,250 in the 1850s and 1860s and then dropping to a range between almost 600 and almost 900 in the period from 1870 to 1940. ¹²⁶ Jews made up around a third of the white elite in the early years, but much less later on. Jewish settlement on the other islands of the Dutch Antilles was limited to a scattered few, except in Aruba, where a small Jewish community formed in the early twentieth century, gradually evolving into a *kehilah*. ¹²⁷ In the 1920s and 1930s, immigrants from eastern Europe (refugees from Poland, Romania, and Belarus) settled in Curaçao. Most were economically active as shopkeepers or tradespeople. They became the first Ashkenazim in the island's Jewish community.

Jewish families such as Alvares Correa, Capriles, Cohen Henriquez, Jessurun, Leao de Laguna, Levy Maduro, and Pinedo had attained prominent positions in Curaçao over the years—not only economically, but also socially, culturally, and in the administration and legal system. For example, the Koloniale Raad (Colonial Council) almost always had at least one Jewish member. The lawyer Abraham Mendes Chumaceiro

¹²⁵ The passage on the Netherlands Antilles (specifically, Curaçao) is based primarily on I. S. and S. A. Emmanuel, *History of the Jews of the Netherlands Antilles*, 2 vols. (Cincinnati, 1970); J. Hartog, *Curaçao: Van kolonie tot autonomie*, vol. ii: *Na* 1816 (Aruba, 1961); H. Hoetink, *Het patroon van de oude Curaçaose samenleving*, 5th edn. (Amsterdam, 1987); and J. Capriles Goldish, 'Curaçao's Sefardische diaspora in binnen- en buitenland', in Cohen (ed.), *Joden in de Cariben*, 202–27. See also J. van Ditshuijzen, *Een sjtetl in de tropen: De asjkenazische gemeenschap op Curaçao* (Amsterdam, 2009). For incisive contemporary observations and recollections, some of which relate to changes in Jewish life, see J. de Pool, *Zo was Curaçao*, Dutch translation of Spanish original, 2nd edn. (Amsterdam, 1985).

¹²⁶ The figures are taken primarily from Hartog, *Curação*, and Capriles Goldish, 'Curação's Sefardische Diaspora' (table on p. 206).

¹²⁷ H. Ziekenoppasser, 'Klein eiland, lange geschiedenis: De joodse geschiedenis van Aruba', *Nieuw Israëlietisch Weekblad*, 25 Mar. 2016.

(the son of Aron Mendes Chumaceiro, an influential rabbi in the 1850s and 1860s) was a controversial commentator on public affairs who played an interesting political role in the final third of the nineteenth century, in part as an advocate of expanding suffrage. In the field of culture, Jacob Jeosuah Naar's construction of a theatre on his own property deserves mention. This Teatro Naar (1871, thoroughly renovated in 1890) became the island's centre for lively stage events, amateur or otherwise. The women's society Entre-nous, formed in 1895 by Rebecca Cohen Henriquez, put great energy into the creation of a park (now Wilhelminapark) on the Fo'i Porta site outside the former city walls of Willemstad and near the new Tempel Emanu-El—a good example of social activity from within the Sephardi community. Nevertheless, there was a social dividing line for many years that separated the Jewish community from a small, mainly Protestant, elite with a higher social status.

For a long time the Jewish community, despite its prominent role on the island, was characterized by 'a closed attitude towards the outside world and an intimacy within'. 128 This closed attitude crumbled away in the course of the nineteenth century, partly under the influence of new economic conditions. The main underlying change was the establishment of oil refineries (after oil was discovered in Venezuela), which had secondary effects on shipping, trade, and the banking sector (Maduro's Bank, later Maduro en Curiels Bank). This brought the Sephardi Jews into closer contact with the people around them, leading to some secularization, more mixed marriages, and even conversions to Catholicism. But none of this implied the end of traditional Jewish life or the severance of ties to Jews elsewhere, let alone the dissolution of the Jewish community.

Curação, unlike the Netherlands, had not only a traditional Orthodox congregation, Mikve Israel (Hope of Israel), but also a Reform congregation, the Nederlandse Hervormde Israëlitische Gemeente (Dutch Reform Israelite Congregation), which had been founded in 1864 after a strenuous conflict, and consecrated Tempel Emanu-El in 1867. Disagreements about religion and worship services became enmeshed with animosities between individuals and, above all, between leading families, especially the Cohen Henriquezes and Levy Maduros. The rift proved impossible to mend for the time being; each group preferred to maintain its separate congregation. Yet this did not stand in the way of lasting ties between Jewish families across denominational boundaries—through marriage, for example. Members of the two congregations worked together on matters of common concern or interest—for instance, in the Curação branch of the Alliance Israélite Universelle. In 1932 they even entered into a friendship agreement, but it did not lead to a merger. In response to the establishment of Tempel Emanu-El, the Mikve Israel congregation introduced a number of 'liberal' reforms of their own. In 1866 they even had an organ installed in their synagogue (Snoa in Papiamentu), a unique step in the Orthodox Jewish world.

The two congregations consistently had great difficulty finding officially qualified rabbis. Tempel Emanu-El had a rabbi only for a short while in its early years, Dr Jacob de Isaac Mendes de Sola (1876-81, interrupted). Mikve Israel had Jeudah Israel Sanctcroos (1869–88) and Joseph Haim Mendes Chumaceiro (1889–91 and 1897–1905; this was another son of the above-mentioned Aron Mendes Chumaceiro). After that, it was not until 1936 that the next rabbi was appointed: Isaac Samuel Emmanuel from Thessaloniki. Just three years later he left because of the tension between the official Orthodox orientation and the 'ultra-Liberal' practice. 129 Religious life was therefore usually led by parnasim, cantors, and teachers of religion. The better-known leaders were David Querido (Mikve Israel), who served as a cantor from 1905 to 1918, and Mozes de Leao de Laguna (1884–1917) and Mortimer Alvares Correa (1918–49) at Tempel Emanu-El. A number of religious and social organizations were directly or indirectly associated with the congregations; these included the Curaçao Ladies Benevolent Society, the Montefiore-fonds (Montefiore Fund), the Alivio del Probe, the Elias S. L. Maduroweldadigheidsfonds (Elias S. L. Maduro Benevolent Fund), and the Young Men's Hebrew Association. The Ashkenazi Jews, most of whom came from eastern Europe (and were sometimes referred to as Polacos), did not join the established Sephardi communities but held religious services according to their own rules and customs. Their services were led by Srul Gerzy Szmylker, their kosher butcher. In 1932 they established an association, Club Union, which organized the services. They had no official kehilah until after the Second World War. In short, Jewish life in Curação on the eve of the Second World War was diverse and vibrant.

Both Jewish and Dutch

Acculturation, internal differentiation, and the persistence of a more or less recognizable Jewish demographic group are the most conspicuous characteristics of the history of the Jews in the Netherlands from 1870 to 1940. Developments in this period can also be described as a long process of emancipation and integration, which of course had its fast and slow stretches, its ups and downs, but which, in comparative international terms, was for the most part gradual. In principle, these tendencies could have led, in a few generations, to a situation where the small Jewish minority was barely, if at all, recognizable as such. Looking ahead from the 1920s, for instance, one might well have expected that continuing secularization would reduce the Jewish religious community to a dwindling band of stalwarts, while the other Jews would be absorbed into the different segments of society to the point of practical or total invisibility (complete assimilation). But this was not the most probable future scenario, in view of

¹²⁹ Emmanuel, *History of the Jews*, 493. Emmanuel did maintain ties with Curaçao. He and his wife wrote one of the first detailed histories of the Jews on the island, the source of much of the information about religious life.

the presence of clear countervailing forces. Most Jews still had a definite sense of being Jewish, whatever that meant to them exactly. Furthermore, the non-Jewish majority set limits on the integration of the Jewish minority. Overt and covert antisemitism, in many different varieties, perpetuated the image of the minority as a separate group that was simply and lastingly different. From an international perspective, antisemitism remained relatively moderate in the Netherlands for many years, but in the 1930s it took more pronounced forms. As a result of all this, one's Jewish ancestry was more or less inescapable, even if escaping it was the express wish. Some concluded from this that it was necessary to adopt a quintessentially Jewish orientation, focusing on religious Judaism or Zionism. Others remained consciously or unconsciously focused on acceptance as equals in Dutch society.

This complex state of affairs, in which Dutchness and Judaism were interconnected in all sorts of ways, was acknowledged both at the time and by later historians—with varying emphases, then and now. One famous description of Dutch Jewry, mentioned in Chapter 5 above, is as the species hollandia judaica, a term introduced by the bibliographer and historian Sigmund Seeligmann in 1923. He approved of the situation in the country and stressed the synthesis between Dutch culture and Judaism in its original form, a synthesis with a long history that had led to a unique variety of human being. 130 The sociologist Jacob Pieter Kruijt was also optimistic about the situation in the 1930s. In the collection Antisemitisme en Jodendom ('Antisemitism and Judaism', 1939), edited by Hendrik Josephus Pos, Kruijt provided a general sketch of the position of the Jews in the Netherlands. He rejected the idea of a stark choice between assimilation beyond recognition into mainstream society and complete orientation towards a separate Jewish nation. 'The persistence of the group alongside other groups, with its own character, without conflict, and with all the groups contained within an overarching whole' was equally possible, Kruijt argued; he saw a distinct Jewish group of this kind as a positive enrichment of Dutch society in all its pluriformity. Although he never used the metaphor of the pillar, what he presented was in a sense an ideal picture of pillarization in the Netherlands. 131

Others took a less sanguine view of the course of events. In 1938, for instance, the social psychologist Julius Leydesdorff contributed an article based on his doctoral thesis from 1919 to the collection *De Nederlandse volkskarakters* ('The Characters of the Dutch People'), which belonged to the, then popular, genre of cultural self-scrutiny. After a discussion of the differences between the Jewish community and mainstream society that ran deeper than, for instance, differences between provinces, he diagnosed the Jews in the Netherlands as mentally ill. The cause of the disease, according to him, was

¹³⁰ S. Seeligmann, 'Die Juden in Holland: Eine Charakteristik', in J. Fischer et al. (eds.), *Festskrift i anledning af professor David Simonsons 70-aarige födelsdag* (Copenhagen, 1923), 253–7.

¹³¹ J. P. Kruijt, 'Het jodendom in de Nederlandse samenleving', in H. J. Pos (ed.), *Antisemitisme en Jodendom* (Arnhem, 1939), 190–231: 227.

their abnormal status in the Netherlands (and, to a much greater degree, elsewhere). Despite their integration and their relatively privileged position, there was really only one possible remedy. Quoting from the poetry of Jacob Israël de Haan, Leydesdorff extolled 'the "promised land" of his [De Haan's] forefathers, where his people are in the process of rising up, awakening from the sleep of twenty centuries—the fallow *land without a people* roused to life by the *people without a land*, a people that only there can become *itself* once more'. 132

Even those who did not choose this Zionist path sometimes were (and are) critical of the demographic outlook, of secularization, of the loss of Jewish distinctiveness, of the social structure that enforced a separation between the politically liberal Jewish middle class and the socialist Jewish working class, and of assimilation, which undermined the Jewish character of Dutch Jewry. The historian Jaap Meijer—whose perspective on the consequences of emancipation is trenchantly presented in Chapter 5 above —spoke about pre-war Dutch Jewry from that same point of view in 1969, even referring to it as a 'degenerating community'. 133 According to this view, the strong orientation of most Dutch Jews towards the Netherlands, an orientation that has sometimes been deemed provincial, 134 progressively weakened the group's ties to international Jewry and thus isolated Dutch Jews at the international level. But other commentators, observing the many and diverse remaining ties to international Judaism—kept alive not only in the religious and Zionist spheres, but also by long-standing relationships, migration, and aid to refugees and other groups—have spoken of a continuity at the Jewish core of Dutch Jewry. The work of the father and son Jozeph and Dan Michman in the late twentieth century actually emphasizes these ties to international Jewry. 135

There is no need to take a position on this controversy here. It seems sufficient to note that most Jews in the Netherlands, like Henri Polak, felt both Jewish and Dutch. The relationship between Jewishness and Dutchness differed between individuals, groups, situations, and periods. Sometimes there was significant tension between the two, but usually there was little or none. In a retrospective piece published in 1982, Hartog Beem remarked: 'They felt like good Dutch people and had taken the country and the monarchy into their hearts, but that did not stop the large majority of them from honouring their Jewish origins. They felt at home in the Low Countries and regarded Amsterdam as their Jerusalem of the West.'¹³⁶

¹³² J. Leydesdorff, 'De Nederlandse Joden', in P. J. Meertens and A. de Vries (eds.), *De Nederlandsche Volkskarakters* (Kampen, 1938), 483–500: 500.

¹³³ J. Meijer, Hoge hoeden, lage standaarden: De Nederlandse Joden tussen 1933 en 1940 (Baarn, 1969), ch. 9.

The term 'provincialistic' (*provincialistisch*) is used in Daalder, 'Joden', 107, and elsewhere. Daalder uses the term in a fairly neutral way, in reference to a degree of 'provincialism' in the Netherlands in this period from an international perspective.

¹³⁵ J. Michman, 'The Jewish Essence'; D. Michman, 'Migration versus "Species Hollandia Judaica": The Role of Migration in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries in Preserving Ties between Dutch and World Jewry', *StR*, special issue accompanying vol. 23 (1989), 54–76.

There was great diversity among Dutch Jews and the Jewish Dutch. The differences were subtle. Those who emphasized their Jewishness without hesitation might be better described as 'Jews in the Netherlands'. Very few of them disavowed Dutchness completely, although this may perhaps have been possible among radical Zionists. Complete disavowal of Jewishness was equally rare—perhaps not even because the wish to live a completely irreligious or Christian life, entirely severed from their Jewish roots, was so uncommon, but because the people around them made this impossible by occasionally, unavoidably, confronting them with their ancestry.

EIGHT

THE WAR, 1940-1945

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The German occupation of the Netherlands and the National Socialist regime lasted barely five years, yet in that short time more than 100,000 Jews from the Netherlands were murdered. This unprecedented crime was part of Nazi Germany's plot for the mass destruction of the Jews throughout Europe, which later came to be called the Holocaust, known in Hebrew as the Shoah. This antisemitic plan was an essential part of Nazi ideology and politics.¹ In the Netherlands, as elsewhere, the first step was the stigmatization of the Jews as the source of incomparable social evil. The German occupation brought the persecutors to power there and enabled them to turn their hatred of the Jews into political policy. This was accomplished step by step. First, the occupying regime isolated the Jews by robbing them of their civil rights and their possessions, and by forcing them to live in a rigorously segregated community. This process of isolation took place on Dutch soil, but the crime culminated in the deportation of the Jews and—the final act, kept secret until the very end—their premeditated murder.

Jewish life in the Netherlands in those years of horror thus took a turn that was irreconcilable with the experiences of earlier generations. Before the Nazi era, Jews and Jewish organizations had had to adopt a stance on their place in society and the nature and experience of their own identity. Most Dutch Jews remained faithful to Jewish traditions even as they were further integrated into Dutch society. Religious life in the two Jewish denominations was dominated by Orthodoxy; the Reform movement, which was much larger in Germany, played only a minor role in the Netherlands. An activist minority looked to Zionism for new ways forward. Many people who did not attend synagogue services found a world-view in the secular political ideology of classical liberalism or socialism. The German occupation transformed the situation radically. The Nazis wanted to sever the ties between the Jews and the society to which they belonged. The lives of all Jews came under threat, and their whole existence in society was soon dominated by the campaign of persecution. The occupying regime isolated the Jews and forced them to accept the Jewish Council (Joodse Raad), a

¹ H. Arendt, Antisemitism: Part One of the Origins of Totalitarianism (San Diego, 1968), 3; J. Herf, The Jewish Enemy: Nazi Propaganda during World War II and the Holocaust (Cambridge, Mass., 2006).

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misleading form of self-governance that made them easier to persecute. This led to great internal tension. Questions of solidarity and neutrality, assistance and betrayal, life and death put relations between Jews and non-Jews to the most stringent test.² For Jews, these contradictory and confusing experiences fundamentally changed the relationship between the individual and society.

Since the Second World War, historians have debated the true nature and circumstances of this catastrophe. Some scholars, of no small reputation, have wondered whether a consensus will ever be reached.³ One key question is whether the Nazis, under Adolf Hitler's leadership, systematically planned, prepared for, and carried out a programme of mass murder. The answer lies in meticulous study of the escalating process of persecution. In areas under their control, the Nazis did not wait long before they began discriminating against the Jews living there, plundering their possessions until nothing remained, and threatening them with death. The fateful step to mass destruction came out of Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union. The German advance in the second half of 1941 was accompanied by a long-drawn-out bloodbath 'on an industrial scale'.⁴ Behind the front, German troops shot tens of thousands of Jewish men, women, and children dead. Then the Germans governing occupied eastern Europe organized ghettos where Jews had to live pending further deportation to concentration and extermination camps.⁵ This was the same fate the Nazis envisaged for Jews elsewhere in Europe.

In the occupied Netherlands, a ruthless system of persecution was constructed step by step. In retrospect, it is clear that the German occupiers introduced the same anti-Jewish measures here that had applied to German Jews since Hitler had seized power in 1933, but at an accelerated rate. While these events were in progress, it was difficult for most of the persecuted Jews to fathom how the system worked, where it would lead, and what forms of resistance might work. As part of the persecution, the Nazis dehumanized social relations, inverting the normal social order. For Jews, legal certainty and the protection of the law were abolished and replaced with the opposite extremes. Those who tried to defend themselves by invoking unimpeachable conduct, citizenship, and written law had not discerned the true nature of the regime and

² J. C. H. Blom, 'De vervolging van de joden in Nederland in internationaal vergelijkend perspectief', in id., *Crisis, bezetting en herstel: Tien studies over Nederland 1930–1950* (Amsterdam, 1989), 142.

³ On this subject, see I. Kershaw, *Der NS-Staat: Geschichtsinterpretationen und Kontroversen im Überblick* (Reinbeck bei Hamburg, 1988), 165–208, and S. Friedlander, 'Die "Endlösung': Über das Unbehagen in der Geschichtdeutung', in W. H. Pehle, *Der historische Ort des Nationalsozialismus* (Frankfurt, 1990), 81–93.

⁴ For the 'industrial scale', see T. Snyder, Bloodlands: Europe between Hitler and Stalin (London, 2010), 210.

⁵ For a discussion of the historical debate on the origins of the mass destruction of Jews under the Nazi regime, see P. Burrin, *Het ontstaan van een volkerenmoord: Hitler en de genocide* (Amsterdam, 1991), 11–17 and 183, and C. R. Browning, *The Origins of the Final Solution: The Evolution of Nazi Jewish Policy*, 1939–1942, with a contribution by J. Matthaus (Jerusalem, 2004).

⁶ P. Friedman, 'Problems of Research on the Holocaust: An Overview' (1957), in id., *Roads to Extinction: Essays on the Holocaust* (New York, 1980), 554–67: 565.

in fact made themselves especially vulnerable. Dutch institutions did not offer this endangered minority sufficient protection when their persecutors forced them to live in a deviant order, a segregated society based on force, the ultimate goal of which was their destruction. This led to confusion, anger, and criticism, some of which was focused on the distinguished members of the Jewish Council, which had been designated by the occupying regime as the administrative body for Jews in the Netherlands.

Antisemitism and persecution left their mark on everything Jews experienced during the occupation. The persecutors and their methods—coercive laws, deception, and terror—remained vivid for many years afterwards in the minds of the survivors and younger generations. Nazi persecution drove people to despair and submission but also brought out their courage and inspiration. Jews in the Netherlands were aware that the experience of persecution in society was one shared with earlier generations, wherever Jews had lived. In spite of their desperation, they went on hoping for survival and a better future, and in the midst of their persecution, they held on to their political and social ideals and 'a scrap of human and Jewish dignity'. This inspired acts of self-defence and resistance, as well as the revival of religious, cultural, and social consciousness.

Before the war, Jews had been set apart from other groups by their religious and community life. At the same time, there had been great differences among them in their religious views, social position, and political orientation. Many secularized Jews identified only to a limited extent with 'the Jewish population'. Most of them were registered as Jewish with the civil registry (*burgerlijke stand*), followed religious marriage and burial customs, and had their sons circumcised. At the same time, they were highly integrated into Dutch society. Unlike in Belgium, for instance, Jews in the Netherlands—with the exception of refugees who had recently immigrated from eastern Europe and Germany⁸—had been Dutch citizens for generations. It seems absurd that, in a country where such great progress had been made in the acculturation and integration of the Jews, they could be excluded from society so effectively.⁹ It was the persecutors who determined, by their discriminatory measures, exactly whom they would regard as belonging to the Jewish community in the Netherlands. They forged this community on the anvil of persecution, and the Dutch Jews had no choice but to see what they could make of the shared identity thrust upon them.¹⁰

⁷ A. J. Herzberg, 'Een andere visie', supplement to the reissue of *Het Joodsche Weekblad* (The Hague, 1979), III.

⁸ B. Moore, *Refugees from Nazi Germany in the Netherlands*, 1933–1940 (Dordrecht, 1986).

⁹ This phenomenon has become known as 'the Dutch paradox'; see W. C. Ultee and H. D. Flap, 'De Nederlandse paradox: Waarom overleefden zoveel Nederlandse joden de Tweede Wereldoorlog niet?', in H. B. G. Ganzenboom and S. Lindenberg (eds.), *Verklarende sociologie: Opstellen voor Reinhard Wippler* (Amsterdam, 1996), 185–97.

¹⁰ 'I had no special ties to the Dutch community, aside from a strong sense of solidarity with those in the same situation', wrote H. Musaph in 'David Cohen was een regent uit vervlogen tijden', in *Nieuw Israelietisch Weekblad*, 'Bijzondere uitgave' (May 1982/Iyar 5742). See also S. de Wolf, *Geschiedenis der joden in Nederland:*

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In the Netherlands the persecution of the Jews unfolded at an astonishing pace. Its component parts were always registration, segregation, robbery, and deportation. The German occupying regime and its Dutch accomplices had the Jews in the Netherlands in their grip from the autumn of 1940 onwards. They designated more than 160,000 people as partly or wholly Jewish in 1941 and deported the large majority of them, 107,000 people, to eastern Europe between 15 July 1942 and 17 September 1944. About 5,200 of the deportees would survive. Almost 28,000 Jews tried to escape deportation by fleeing and going into hiding, and more than 16,000 survived in hiding until their region was liberated. At the same time, around 5,000 Jews exempted from deportation and 10,500 Jews in mixed marriages were permitted to remain in the Netherlands 'legally'. The persecution of the Jews in the Netherlands was a social upheaval that cannot be understood without considering the general objectives of German policy in the country and other occupied areas. It was in the persecution of the Jews that the National Socialist revolution most clearly revealed its true colours; it would stop at nothing to strip these people of their humanity.

The bewilderment that this provoked led to the radical alienation of the targets of persecution from the world at large. David Koker, a Jewish prisoner in Vught, wrote in his diary on 28 May 1943 regarding his assignment to a work detail outside the camp: 'I almost had tears in my eyes when I passed through the village and saw living rooms. How far we have already come. And on the way back, the people. Many holidaymakers, putting on pious expressions as we passed with our stars and our SS man behind us.'¹³ Meaningful interaction between Jews and non-Jews was no longer possible because of the mutual inability of each group to determine its stance towards the other.¹⁴ In the lives that the Jewish community had to lead during the Holocaust, 'different laws for a different existence' were in force.¹⁵

Laatste bedrijf (Amsterdam, 1946), 2–3, who describes the Jewish 'Schicksalgemeinschaft' ('community of fate'), and S. van den Bergh, Deportaties: Westerbork Theresiënstadt Auschwitz Gleiwitz (Bussum, n.d.), 7, who writes of the Jewish lijdensgemeenschap ('community of suffering').

- ¹¹ R. Hilberg, The Destruction of the European Jews (New York, 1985), 267.
- 12 G. Hirschfeld, 'Niederlande', in W. Benz (ed.), Dimension des Völkermords: Die Zahl der jüdischen Opfer des Nationalsozialismus (Munich, 1991), 137–65: 165; on this subject, see also C. Stuldreher, De legale rest: Gemengd gehuwde Joden onder de Duitse bezetting (Amsterdam, 2007). The list of names of the murdered Jews with dates and places of birth and death, based on information from the Oorlogsgravenstichting (War Graves Foundation) in The Hague, is in In Memoriam (The Hague, 1995). See also the website www.joodsmonument.nl for the digital monument to the Jewish community in the Netherlands. For calculations and estimates of the numbers who fled, went into hiding, and received exemptions, see L. de Jong, Het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden in de Tweede Wereldoorlog, 14 vols. (The Hague, 1969–91), vol. vii, 318. See also K. Happe, Viele Falsche Hoffnungen: Judenverfolgung in den Niederlanden 1940–1945 (Paderborn, 2017).
 - ¹³ D. Koker, *Dagboek geschreven in Vught*, 3rd edn. (Amsterdam, 1993), 123.
 - ¹⁴ G. Durlacher, Strepen aan de hemel: Oorlogsherinneringen (Amsterdam, 1985), 21.
 - $^{15}\,$ S. Dresden, Vervolging, vernietiging, literatuur (Amsterdam, 1991), 111.

The German Invasion

German troops conquered the Netherlands in May 1940 in a blitzkrieg, a swift attack. Well-known opponents of Nazism and Jews who realized the danger they were in attempted to flee. Since the German advance had made the southern border inaccessible, the only way to escape was by sea. Desperate people went to IJmuiden and other port towns in the hope of finding passage on a ship. The authorities were unable to improvise an orderly evacuation. Nevertheless, some 3,000 panicking people were able to depart for England at the last minute. Probably around a few hundred of them were Jewish. 16 No special measures were taken for the evacuation of Jews. It became clear to Jewish refugees from Germany that they were no longer safe from the Nazis in the Netherlands. At the time of the invasion, the Dutch justice ministry ordered the internment of hundreds of them as subjects of the enemy power—side by side, in fact, with leading figures from the Dutch Nazi Party (Nationaal-Socialistische Beweging, NSB). Plans had been made for the German Jews in Westerbork refugee camp, in the province of Drenthe, to be taken to safety. They were put on a train for that purpose, but it never went further than Leeuwarden. The chief rabbi of Friesland and Drenthe, Abraham Salomon Levisson, who had overseen the reception of Jewish refugees, escorted the train and found accommodation for the more than 100 refugees in Leeuwarden.¹⁷ By order of the occupying regime, they had to return, for the time being, to the dismal routine of life in Westerbork.

Most Jews could hardly imagine what fate awaited them. There were plenty of people who had no illusions about the intentions of the occupying regime but could not or would not flee. Those who saw no prospect of living with dignity or who were determined not to live under the Nazi regime also had the option of suicide as an escape route, and perhaps even as the ultimate act of resistance. In the days directly following the invasion of May 1940, 188 Jews in the Netherlands are known to have taken their lives; this figure includes ninety-six in Amsterdam, twenty-nine in The Hague, and seven in Rotterdam. Their voluntary deaths cast a deep shadow over the future

¹⁶ De Jong, Het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden, iii. 433–43; De Jong's work is based in part on a report by the Dutch Red Cross in London. See also J. Presser, Ondergang: De vervolging en verdelging van het Nederlandse jodendom 1940–1945 (The Hague, 1965), i. 13. See also E. M. Somers (ed.), Voorzitter van de Joodse Raad: De herinneringen van David Cohen (1941–1943) (Zutphen, 2010), 62–5.

¹⁷ Policy document of 18 Apr. 1940 addressed to the internal affairs minister in the occupying regime regarding the evacuation camp Westerbork, and report of 25 May 1940 by the deputy director of Camp Westerbork to the internal affairs department of the occupying regime on what had become of the residents of this camp during the German raid, in C. K. Berghuis, *Joodse vluchtelingen in Nederland* 1938–1940: *Documenten betreffende toelating, uitleiding en kampopname* (Kampen, n.d.); De Jong, *Het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden*, iii. 196–200

¹⁸ W. Ultee and R. Luijkx, 'De schaduw van een hand: Joods-gojse huwelijken en Joodse zelfdodingen in Nederland 1946–1943', in H. Flap and W. Arts (eds.), *De organisatie van de bezetting* (Amsterdam, 1997), 55–76: 62–6.

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expectations of those who remained.¹⁹ After the capitulation the Dutch wondered what the occupiers would do and whether they would establish a dictatorship on the German model. As they waited to find out the tension mounted, especially among Jews. Discrimination and pogroms in pre-war Germany were still fresh in their minds.

Those who understood Hitler's *Mein Kampf* and other foundations of Nazi ideology knew that this militant antisemitism sought to transgress borders. But the occupying regime hoped to win the trust of the Dutch people and hence their support for Nazi Germany. Since immediate, harsh measures targeting the Jewish population could have stood in the way of that plan, social life was seemingly permitted to resume its usual course. Even as various German authorities announced that they did not intend to take anti-Jewish measures, the new overlords were secretly examining the question of how to implement what they called *Judenaktion* (literally 'Jewish action') in the near future. As in other places, they took their time to organize the campaign of persecution and distribute the relevant powers and responsibilities among the parties involved. In those early days, they had not yet decided on their ultimate goal, were unable to assign many people or substantial resources to the cause in the short term, and wanted to avoid offending the sensitivities of people in the occupied states for the time being. ²¹

The major pogrom that many had feared did not take place in 1940. What did begin to happen in that year was that Dutch Nazis and German soldiers engaged in street terror and vandalized synagogues and Jewish cemeteries.²² This created an unmistakable atmosphere of menace, in which every Jew and every Jewish congregation had to acknowledge that they were in great danger. There were also German measures that offered early indications of the discrimination still to come, such as an ordinance prohibiting ritual slaughter. It was possible to go on practising ritual slaughter without violating this ordinance by purchasing an electrical stunning device, but that required a

¹⁹ De Jong, Het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden, iii. 451; A. Herzberg, Kroniek der Jodenvervolging 1940–1945, 5th edn. (Amsterdam, 1985), 40–1. See also K. Kwiet, 'The Ultimate Refuge: Suicide in the Jewish Communities under the Nazis', in M. R. Marrus (ed.), The Nazi Holocaust II: The Origins of the Holocaust (Westport, Conn., 1989), 658–90. This author regards suicide among Western European Jews in the face of oppression and deportation as a non-conformist choice, considering that it was in conflict with Nazi policy aimed at making the deportation and murder proceed as smoothly as possible (pp. 660–1).

²⁰ De Jong, Het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden, iv. 747–8.

 $^{^{21}}$ M. Marrus and R. O. Paxton, 'The Nazis and the Jews in Occupied Western Europe', *Journal of Modern History*, 54 (1982), 687–714.

²² J. Michman, H. Beem, and D. Michman, *Pinkas: Geschiedenis van de joodse gemeenschap in Nederland* (Amsterdam, 1992); information about Sittard at p. 521; Nijkerk at p. 476; Utrecht at p. 543; Vlissingen at p. 557; Assen at p. 296; Arnhem at p. 292; Borculo at p. 306; Deventer at p. 332. See also H. J. van Baalen, *De joodse gemeente te Deventer, omvattende Bathmen, Deventer, Diepenveen, Heino, Holten, Olst, Raalte, Twello en Wijhe (Zutphen, 1989), 85; C. van Dam, Jodenvervolging in de stad Utrecht (Utrecht, 1985), 48; F. J. Hulst, <i>De Joodse gemeente Assen: Geschiedenis van een behoorlijke Kille, 1740–1976* (Assen, 1991), 143–4; and K. Ribbens, 'Zullen wij nog terugkeeren...': De jodenvervolging in Amersfoort tijdens de Tweede Wereldoorlog (Amersfoort, 2002).

special dispensation from the chief rabbis and entailed serious expense.²³ It seemed at first that it would be possible for Jews to adapt without compromising their identity, so they proceeded cautiously.²⁴

Consciously or unconsciously, the Dutch Jews had reverted to a familiar approach from the diaspora. The priority was to avoid confrontation in the hope that they would then be left alone. At the same time, they lost much of their latitude to live as they chose. The earliest antisemitic actions in the Netherlands were the work of a small, radical minority, which won hardly any support among the non-Jewish Dutch population. Yet at the same time, it became clear that non-Nazis, people who would never wish to see themselves as antisemites, were willing to comply with measures ordered by the occupiers, and even to go further in anticipation of future measures. This became apparent in July 1940 when the occupying regime declared that Jews were no longer allowed to work for the civil defence service for air raids (luchtbescherming).²⁵ By then the Dutch authorities had already sent home their Jewish staff members on their own initiative. Occasional anticipatory dismissals also took place in the private sector, broadcasting companies, and the press. Employers offered the rationale that, under the circumstances, it was better for Jews to keep a low profile. This 'protection-bydismissal' argument was fundamentally a fairly transparent show of willingness to cooperate with the occupying regime at the expense of Jewish employees.²⁶

Registration

Intimidation in the streets was followed, sooner than expected, by official discrimination. The first attack targeted Jewish Dutch nationals at work in the public service. In September 1940 the German authorities ordered the Dutch public administration to set up a registration system for Jews working as government officials and in other roles in the public sector. The secretaries-general of the national departments that governed the country on behalf of the government-in-exile protested against this demand. Yet in early October, they distributed the forms relating to the infamous *ariërverklaring*, or declaration of 'Aryan', non-Jewish status.²⁷ All employees in the public sector had to

- ²³ Verordnungsblatt für die besetzten niederlandischen Gebieten, 80/1940 zur Vermeidung von Tierqualerei beim Viehschlachten, dated 31 July 1940. The purchase of a Philips device cost the Leeuwarden community 350 guilders; H. Beem, De joden van Leeuwarden: Geschiedenis van een joods cultuurcentrum (Assen, 1974), 249.
- ²⁴ Interview with H. Goubitz in P. Bregstein and S. Bloemgarten, *Herinnering aan joods Amsterdam* (Amsterdam, 1978), 308.
- ²⁵ Herzberg, *Kroniek*, 56. In Eindhoven, this measure entered into force earlier, on 14 May 1940, even before the capitulation had officially taken place; compare Michman et al., *Pinkas*, 348.
- ²⁶ Some Jewish musicians even literally receded into the background, being moved to the rearmost rows; for this and other examples, see De Jong, *Het Koninkrijk*, iv. 752–3; P. Micheels, *Muziek in de schaduw van het Derde Rijk: De Nederlandse symfonie-orkesten 1933–1945* (Zutphen, 1993), 165–70; and for the decision by the management of the AVRO broadcasting association to dismiss Jewish employees, see D. Verkijk, *Radio Hilversum 1940–1945: De omroep in de oorlog* (Amsterdam, 1974), 252–7.
 - ²⁷ For an image of this form, see Presser, *Ondergang*, i, between pp. 32 and 33.

declare whether they and their spouses had Jewish parents or grandparents, or else face sanctions. This same requirement applied to members of local and provincial councils and of the national parliament, the States General. The secretaries-general saw what this measure signified and collectively protested, but when that made no difference, they decided to obey. Their aim was to be faithful to the mission that the government had assigned to them before departing in exile for London: to remain at their posts in the interest of the general population. Furthermore, they firmly believed that, if they ceased to cooperate, they would essentially be turning over public administration to the Nazis completely. They saw an NSB takeover as 'the greater evil'. ²⁸

From the German perspective, registration proceeded satisfactorily. Those who hesitated sought guidance from their superiors and received none. 'London' said nothing, and the members of the Supreme Court (Hoge Raad) decided, to the great disappointment of leading legal professionals, not to refuse to submit the declaration, because most of them believed the occupying regime had the right to take such measures under the wartime circumstances.²⁹ With these decisions, the secretariesgeneral and the Supreme Court forfeited the opportunity for collective protest. Those who recognized the principles at stake, and wished to act accordingly, were on their own. A few individuals refused, and many people who submitted a declaration would later bitterly regret it. The logical consequence of registering arrived in the form of a German ordinance of 4 November 1940. More than 2,500 Jews employed by public services and institutions, including twenty local councillors and six aldermen, received notice from senior Dutch officials that, under that ordinance, they were no longer permitted to carry out their duties, although they would continue to receive their salaries for the time being. This led to embarrassing situations: the news was often transmitted in registered letters couched in official jargon and delivered by regular post. Some superiors showed their sympathy; for example, the mayor of Utrecht visited the city employees he had dismissed to keep their spirits up.³⁰

The public employees who kept their jobs responded with resignation to this violation of Dutch legal principles, which targeted their Jewish co-workers. This passivity was characteristic of the autumn of 1940 throughout western Europe, where the German victories had made a deep impression. Still, there were local initiatives to help people who had been dismissed and were being progressively deprived of their means of subsistence by offering them freelance work of various kinds. The same mood of resignation prevailed among the Jews affected, especially those who, in the words of the

²⁸ P. Romijn, Burgemeesters in oorlogstijd: Besturen onder Duitse bezetting (Amsterdam, 2006), 232, 248, 454.

The president, L. E. Visser, was Jewish and did not wish to participate in the discussion for that reason; see De Jong, Het Koninkrijk, iv. 762; P. Mazel, In naam van het recht: De Hoge Raad en de Tweede Wereldoorlog (Arnhem, 1984); C. Jansen (with D. Venema), De Hoge Raad en de Tweede Wereldoorlog: Recht en rechtsbeoefening in de jaren 1930–1950 (Amsterdam, 2011), 91–4, and D. Venema, Rechters in oorlogstijd: De confrontatie van de Nederlandse rechterlijke macht met nationaal-socialisme en bezetting (The Hague, 2007), 297.

³⁰ De Jong, Het Koninkrijk, iv. 869–70. For Utrecht, see Van Dam, Jodenvervolging in de stad Utrecht, 49–50.

Amsterdam legal scholar Izaak Kisch, had 'long been aware of the predicament of the Jewish people'. ³¹ Leo Polak, by contrast, refused to accept his dismissal as a professor at the University of Groningen and was arrested by the German *Sicherheitspolizei*. He died in December 1941 in Sachsenhausen concentration camp. ³² Only the expulsion of Jewish employees from secondary schools and higher education led to open protest. The best-known example is the speech given by Professor Rudolph Pabus Cleveringa of the University of Leiden in that institution's great hall on 26 November 1940. In response to the expulsion of his Jewish colleague Eduard Maurits Meijers, he observed that the act laid bare the true nature of the occupying regime: 'My sole wish now is to leave them [the occupiers] out of sight and below us, and to direct your gaze to the heights, where the shining figure stands of the man [Meijers] who is the reason for our presence here.'³³

The dismissal of the Jewish public employees was accepted partly in the hope that this would satisfy the occupying regime's antisemitic ambitions. But it did not. The German authorities took a similar approach to removing Jews from economic life. In an ordinance of 22 October 1940 (VO 189/40), they ordered Jews to register their economic assets with the Wirtschaftsprüfstelle (Economic Investigation Office) established for that purpose. They registered more than 20,000 businesses that were Jewish assets, according to the German definition, or in which Jews had a dominant influence.³⁴ One key article of VO 189/40 defined who was regarded as Jewish. The first category was anyone 'who descends from at least three grandparents who were fully Jewish by race'. A second category of Jew was also defined: anyone who either had two 'fully Jewish' grandparents and belonged to the Jewish religious community, or had two 'fully Jewish' grandparents and was married to a Jewish man or woman. To prevent confusion, the ordinance stated that grandparents would be regarded as 'fully Jewish' if they had belonged to the Jewish religious community.35 In other words, the ultimate criterion for membership in the 'Jewish race' was the religious affiliation of the living people in question and their ancestors. Despite this inconsistency, the same criterion had proved

 $^{^{31}}$ Interview with I. Kisch, who was then a *privaatdocent* (unsalaried unversity instructor) in Amsterdam, in Bregstein and Bloemgarten, *Herinnering aan Joods Amsterdam*, 310–11.

³² Presser, *Ondergang*, i. 96–7; S. van der Poel, '"Euthymia bleibt uns": De laatste jaren van Leo Polak 1938–1941', *Tijdschrift voor Biografie* (Spring 2015), 38–47.

³³ Van der Poel, "Euthymia bleibt uns", 45–6; see also Michman, Beem, and Michman, *Pinkas*, information on Tiel at p. 535; Groningen at p. 399; and Doetinchem at p. 339; and Cleveringa's speech of 26 Nov. 1940, quoted in Presser, *Ondergang*, i. 43.

³⁴ Ordinance 189/40 of 22 Oct. 1940; De Jong, *Het Koninkrijk*, iv, part 2, pp. 760–1; Presser, *Ondergang*, i. 54–7. This *Wirtschaftsprüfstelle* was established when the Dutch bureaucracy refused to oversee this registration. On the definition of the term 'Jewish' in this ordinance 189/40, which unlike the ordinance on public employees was formulated in keeping with the Nuremberg race laws, see De Jong, *Het Koninkrijk*, iv. 761. For the complete Dutch provisions, see Presser, *Ondergang*, i. 54.

³⁵ Ordinance 189/40, discussed by K. P. L. Berkley in Overzicht van het ontstaan, de werkzaamheden en het streven van den Joodschen Raad voor Amsterdam (Amsterdam, 1945), 16–17.

very useful to the Nazis in pre-war Germany, where they had made extensive use of synagogal registers to investigate who should be regarded as a Jew. 36 From that time on, almost all anti-Jewish measures in the Netherlands would rely on the definition in VO 189/40.

A following step laid the administrative groundwork for the measures targeting the whole Jewish population of the Netherlands. Starting in September 1940, the persecutors investigated how Jews could be identified as a distinct category in civil records. They decided that anyone with at least one Jewish grandparent would be required to register. This registration process aimed at completeness, but the 'half-Jews' and 'quarter-Jews' were to be left alone for the time being once they had registered; the occupiers could deal with them later, if they so desired. For this purpose, the German authorities called on the services of Dutch government organizations, particularly the National Inspectorate of Civil Registries (Rijksinspectie op de Bevolkingsregisters) and the local civil records under its supervision. It was the Inspectorate that came up with the idea of incorporating the registration of Jews into existing plans to issue identity papers to all Dutch nationals of at least 15 years of age. Jews' identity papers were stamped with a black letter J, and the cards in civil registries corresponding to individual Jews were marked so that they could easily be picked out of the files.

A full 160,886 people were categorized in this operation by 1 October 1941: 140,001 Jews, 14,895 half-Jews, and 5,990 quarter-Jews.³⁷ This registration method permitted quick, effective review of whether anti-Jewish measures were being carried out consistently and in full. The persecutors turned the perfect organizational system for the civil records into a vital tool for the complete control of the Jewish population. This series of measures suddenly made people extraordinarily easy to capture, whether at home, by means of the civil records organized by name, or elsewhere, through identity papers stamped with a black J, which were almost impossible to forge. The threat posed to Jews by the registration process was only vaguely recognized at first.³⁸ Those who perceived its discriminatory nature from the start looked on it with abhorrence and advocated refusal to participate. The story of the Supreme Court president, Lodewijk Ernst Visser, who had refused to accept identity papers with a J, spread beyond The Hague. Others believed they should not repudiate their ancestry and saw registration as an honourable duty. Even so, many people felt cornered. There were Jews who resisted the requirement to register by denying their Jewish identity. Various procedural loopholes were discovered for this purpose, but they were very time-consuming, could not guarantee success, and put people under heavy, long-lasting pressure. There

³⁶ G. Aly and K. H. Roth, *Die restlose Erfassung: Volkszählen, Identifizieren, Aussondern im Nationalsozialismus* (Berlin, 1984), 70–1, for the use of religious registries of baptisms and marriages in the investigation of racial origins in pre-war Germany.

³⁷ Statistiek der bevolking van Joodschen bloede in Nederland (The Hague, 1941). See also Ch. 7 above, Table 2.

³⁸ Herzberg, Kroniek, 64.

were also people who did not register and suffered no consequences. But the large majority complied with the registration requirement; they went along with the situation, like most Dutch people in the early stage of the occupation, or they saw no alternative for fear of reprisals.³⁹

Segregation

In February 1941, Dutch Nazis under the protection of the German regime provoked anti-Jewish riots in Amsterdam. After one of them died during a pogrom in the Jewish quarter around Waterlooplein, German police closed off the area and conducted a brutal search for weapons. The representative of the German regime in Amsterdam summoned a few leading Jews and ordered them to form a 'Jewish Council' (Joodsche Raad; Plate 61) for the city, tasked with helping to restore law and order. This organization would represent the Jews in the Netherlands to the German authorities and be responsible for making sure that the targets of persecution obeyed the orders of their persecutors.

It had two co-presidents: diamond company owner Abraham Asscher and Professor David Cohen. These two prominent figures, mentioned in the previous chapter, had worked together before the war on assistance to Jewish refugees in the Netherlands—Asscher in many roles, including the presidency of the Orthodox Ashkenazi denomination (the Nederlands-Israëlitisch Kerkgenootschap, NIK), and Cohen as the secretary of the Committee for Special Jewish Interests (Comité voor Bijzondere Joodse Belangen, CBJB), also headed by Asscher. Although they knew how demanding their new task would be, they felt obliged to provide leadership to the community they had served for so many years. To them, the task felt something like a calling—even if it was not their own community, but the occupying regime, that had called on them.

On 13 February 1941 the twenty men assembled by Asscher and Cohen held their first meeting. The presidents urged Amsterdam's Jews to turn over their weapons; that was the only way they could live and work in peace. The Nazi provocations continued nonetheless, and on 22 and 23 February 1941 Amsterdam's Jewish community was

³⁹ The case of the few Jews in Delfzijl and Weiwerd who did not register is reported in J. Bottema, *Ze waren onder ons:* 300 jaar joden in Delfzijl 1642–1942 (Delfzijl, [1980]), 118; B. A. Sijes, 'The Position of the Jews during the German Occupation of the Netherlands: Some Observations', in M. R. Marrus (ed.), *The Nazi Holocaust*, iv: *The 'Final Solution' outside Germany* (Westport, Conn., 1989), 146–68: 155, estimates that fifty Jews in total escaped the mandatory registration. The chief of the German police in the Netherlands, the *höherer SS- und Polizeiführer* Hanns Albin Rauter, issued an ordinance on 6 Aug. 1941 noting that the mandatory registration was being evaded and threatening whoever did not register before 15 Aug. with punishment in 'a labour camp'. Many people interpreted this, correctly, as a threat of deportation to Mauthausen concentration camp.

⁴⁰ For the debate on the formation of the Jewish Council, see D. Michman, 'De oprichting van de "Joodsche Raad voor Amsterdam" vanuit een vergelijkend perspectief', in *Oorlogsdocumentatie* '40-'45, *Jaarboek van het Rijksinstituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie*, 3 (Zutphen, 1992), 75–100, and J. Th. M. Houwink ten Cate, 'Heydrich's Security Police and the Amsterdam Jewish Council (February 1941–October 1942)', *DJH* iii. 381–93.

introduced to the phenomenon of the round-up. In the Jewish quarter around Jonas Daniël Meijerplein, the German police picked up 425 Jewish men from their houses and from the streets (PLATE 63). Protest against this round-up led to the February Strike of 1941, one of the rare examples of mass protest against the persecution of Jews in occupied Europe. The people taken into custody were held in a camp in Schoorl and then deported to Mauthausen concentration camp in Austria, from which the Jewish Council soon received a series of death notices. This made it clear that in Mauthausen even the strongest could not survive long. The camp's name very quickly had intimidating undertones for Jews in the Netherlands, representing an unofficial yet cruel and inescapable death sentence.⁴¹

A very direct threat emanated from a speech given in Amsterdam's Concert-gebouw on 12 March by the German Reichskommissar Arthur Seyss-Inquart, the head of the civil administration. In response to the February Strike that had just been crushed, he announced that Jews were no longer part of the Dutch people. Seyss-Inquart called on the Dutch to use their heads and support Germany: 'We will strike at the Jews wherever we find them, and those who side with them must bear the consequences.' The regime's plan was for the Jewish Council to play a key role in this process. Throughout occupied Europe, the German persecutors reinforced the internal organization of local and national Jewish life. In the Netherlands, they decided to make the Jewish Council the binding force, as well as the only channel for communicating German measures, which were generally published in the Council's periodical, *Het Joodsche Weekblad* ('The Jewish Weekly'). In this mixture of isolation and self-administration, individual Jews no longer existed for the German authorities. They were left entirely to their own leaders, who had to comply with the organizers and leaders of the Holocaust.⁴³

From 1941 onwards, the occupying regime systematically excluded Jewish Dutch nationals and refugees from the Dutch public administration, thus making it possible to deny them any rights. 44 The protection that Jews and other groups targeted by racists had received from their Dutch nationality or from the Dutch state was taken away. At the start of the occupation, there were more than 22,000 Jews in the Netherlands who had fled there from Germany before the war; some of them originally came from Poland and other eastern European states and had been rendered stateless by the German government. 45 The nearly 15,000 German Jewish refugees were stripped of

⁴¹ Presser, *Ondergang*, i. 89–92. For the 'devilish Mauthausen deception', see A. J. van der Leeuw, 'Meer slachtoffers dan elders in West-Europa', *Nieuw Israëlietisch Weekblad*, 15 Nov. 1985 (2 Kislev 5748).

⁴² B. A. Sijes, De Februaristaking, 25–26 februari 1941 (The Hague, 1954), 179–80.

⁴³ Compare Z. Bauman, Modernity and the Holocaust (Cambridge, 1989), 121.

⁴⁴ A term introduced by W. Veraart, Ontrechting en rechtsherstel in Nederland en Frankrijk in de jaren van bezetting en wederopbouw (Rotterdam, 2005), 48 ff.

⁴⁵ Hirschfeld, 'Niederlande', 137. The German occupiers assumed a figure of c.16,000 'Jewish emigrants from Germany', according to a report by the representative of the Auswartiges Amt (German foreign

their nationality by the occupying regime in November 1941. These refugees fell under the authority of the Jewish Council but were not represented on it. There were, however, some German Jews involved in the Council's activities, such as Gertrude van Tijn-Cohn. A resident of the Netherlands since the First World War, she worked for a number of Jewish organizations, including the Committee for Jewish Refugees (Comité voor Joodse Vluchtelingen, CJV). She ran the Jewish Council's emigration department and hoped to help Jews escape persecution by emigrating to safe countries. But the German authorities decided to reserve 'emigration' (emigratie) as a euphemism for deportation and renamed her department 'Hulp aan vertrekkenden' ('Departure Assistance'). In her role there, Van Tijn was involved in some of the most challenging dilemmas that faced the Jewish Council's leaders. 46 It was not until July 1942, when the deportations began, that the Council's joint presidents assembled an advisory body of foreign Jews, a decision directly prompted by the fact that the first group summoned for departure was composed mostly of German Jews. Before that time, the Council had assisted with the registration of foreign Jews and their possessions, an operation that preceded a similar one for Dutch Jews.⁴⁷

In judging the choices made by Jewish leaders in the Netherlands under pressure of persecution, it is essential to keep in mind the detachment of the Dutch public administration, which provided the Jewish Council with little or no backing. The German occupying regime controlled the machinery of Dutch government and used it to enforce its own policies. At the top of the hierarchy, German supervisors ran the ministries and the Reichskommissar's provincial representatives issued instructions to the provincial and local authorities. The German police force run by the Schutzstaffel (Nazi paramilitary organization; the SS) was a forceful presence at the operational level, and there were also separate organizations that coordinated and carried out the robbery of Jews and looting of their possessions. The Jews lived in fear not only of their German persecutors, but of the many Dutch collaborators who were complicit in discrimination, denial of rights, and persecution.

Dutch government institutions did not systematically resist becoming involved in the persecution of Jews, nor did the Dutch government in London take any steps to change the situation. Radio Oranje—the government-in-exile's radio programme, broadcast from London—did decry the anti-Jewish measures in the Netherlands. Queen Wilhelmina and Prime Minister Pieter Sjoerds Gerbrandy even declared their outrage at 'the destruction' of Dutch Jewry in the autumn of 1943. Yet 'London', too,

ministry), O. Bene, to Seyss-Inquart, I Oct. 1941, quoted in De Jong, Het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden in de Tweede Wereldoorlog, v. 1027; B. Moore, Slachtoffers en overlevenden: De nazi-vervolging van de joden in Nederland (Amsterdam, 1998), 107; I. Meinen and A. Meyer, Vervolgd van land tot land: Joodse vluchtelingen in West-Europa 1938–1944 (Antwerp, 2014).

⁴⁶ B. Wasserstein, Gertrude van Tijn en het lot van de Nederlandse Joden (Amsterdam, 2013).

⁴⁷ De Jong, Het Koninkrijk, vi. 5.

proceeded with great caution; the ministers in exile balked at the idea of calling for heroic acts of resistance against the persecution of the Jews. They did not wish to place too much emphasis on the targeting of the Jews amid all the suffering inflicted on the whole Dutch nation by the occupiers. This failure to acknowledge the exceptional nature of the wartime persecution of the Jews, the result of a sense of national victim-hood, would remain a central factor in the Dutch government's dealings with the country's hard-hit Jewish community for many years after the war.⁴⁸

When the occupiers began to persecute Dutch Jews, the leading national authorities failed to respond adequately, because they chose what they saw as the lesser evil: namely, keeping the machinery of government intact so that social life could proceed as normally as possible and chaos could be averted. They therefore accepted the strangulation of Jewish life that this entailed—though with no satisfaction and with frequent shame. Their initial protests against discriminatory measures led nowhere, since they were unwilling to back them up with consequences. In September 1941 the German chief of police in the Netherlands, Hanns Albin Rauter, announced that the Jews no longer fell under the authority of the Dutch public administration. The senior official at the Department of the Interior, Karel Johannes Frederiks, replied to Rauter that he saw no choice but to accept this decision. His aim was to prevent 'the Jewish question', as he called it, from leading to a confrontation with the Germans. He feared that the German supervisors in charge of the government departments would replace uncooperative Dutch officials with NSB members. Frederiks and his allies saw the takeover of the bureaucracy by Dutch Nazis as the greater evil and sought to protect the entire Dutch population from that outcome. To do so, they ceded responsibility for part of the population, the Jews, to the occupiers.⁴⁹

Jews thus lost the protection of the law and came under the direct authority of the complex of German organizations tasked with segregating and later deporting them. They became subject to special, binding rules—sometimes set out in written ordinances and sometimes announced orally. In a few cases, such rules were not made explicit at all, even though their accidental infringement might lead to physical abuse, rapid deportation, and death. In this manner, the persecutors created a relationship with their targets that stood outside of normal power structures. As part of this approach, the Germans refused to communicate directly with other Jewish leaders and organizations. It was irrelevant to them that many Jews and Jewish institutions did not feel represented by the Jewish Council.

The fact that the Jewish Council was composed of dignitaries, along with its acquiescent attitude towards the German authorities, drew a great deal of criticism, and consequently the majority of Jews, in the words of the Zionist socialist author Sam de Wolff, 'followed Asscher and Cohen's instructions only sulkily and defiantly'.⁵⁰

F. Boterman, Duitse daders: De Jodenvervolging en de nazificatie van Nederland (1940–1945) (Amsterdam, 2015),
 371–4.
 Romijn, Burgemeesters in oorlogstijd, 451–4.
 De Wolff, Geschiedenis der joden in Nederland, 42.

The Jewish Council was dominated by its presidents, especially Cohen. This had to do with his personal aura of authority, but also with the occupying regime's insistence on speaking only to the presidents—a principle they also applied to other organizations in the occupied Netherlands. Within the Council and its bureaucracy, there was repeated opposition. For example, the leading Zionist Abel Jacob Herzberg, who was on the editorial staff of the *Het Joodsche Weekblad* at first, clashed with Cohen's policies and resigned.

In December 1940 the denominations and other Jewish organizations had established an umbrella organization, the Jewish Coordinating Commission (Joodse Coördinatie Commissie; JCC) on the initiative of the Dutch Zionist League (Nederlandse Zionistenbond). The JCC president, Lodewijk Ernst Visser, who had been expelled from his former office as president of the Supreme Court, urged the Dutch authorities to protect Jewish Dutch nationals where possible. The Germans acknowledged only the Jewish Council and, in November 1941, ordered the JCC to discontinue its work and transfer its activities to the Council. This led to new opposition to the Council presidents. Visser warned Cohen of the potential consequences of his policy of accommodation. Isaak Kisch, another JCC member and, according to the Dutch historian Louis de Jong, Visser's eyes and ears on the Jewish Council, resigned from the Council in 1941. When the occupying regime shut down the JCC, it instructed the Jewish Council to form a national network in which prominent Jews, including JCC representatives and rabbis, acted as provincial and local Jewish Council representatives subordinate to the central organization in Amsterdam.⁵¹ The Council set up local offices where members of Jewish communities could request information and apply for permits for travelling, moving house, or other purposes. They were also involved in social work. There was a great deal of work to be done by whoever wished to contribute to building Jewish community life in the teeth of oppression. This all followed inevitably from the two-sided nature of the Jewish Council: as an instrument of the persecutors, it inspired repugnance, but even so, its activities provided temporary stability and even a measure of consolation, enabling Jews to retreat into the life of their own community.

New Restrictions

In the course of 1941 the Germans limited Jews' freedom of movement by introducing a long series of restrictions, one after another.⁵² Jews were no longer permitted to

⁵¹ For the changes in the composition of the Jewish Council, see De Jong, *Het Koninkrijk*, v. 520 n; for Kisch, see ibid. 519. See also J. Michman-Melkman, 'De briefwisseling tussen Mr. L. E. Visser en Prof. Dr. D. Cohen', *StR* 8 (1974), 107–30; J. A. Polak, *Leven en werken van mr. L. E. Visser* (Amsterdam, 1974); and De Jong, *Het Koninkrijk*, v. 578; Cohen's version is in Somers (ed.), *Voorzitter van de Joodse Raad*, 70–3; for a biography of Cohen, see P. H. Schrijvers, *Rome, Athene, Jeruzalem: Leven en werk van prof.dr. David Cohen* (Groningen, 2000).

⁵² Moore, *Slachtoffers en overlevenden*, supplement: 'Vervolging van de Joden in Nederland—Chronologie', 315–21.

enter public buildings or use facilities such as marketplaces, parks, hotels, restaurants, cafés, theatres, cinemas, swimming pools, concert halls, public libraries, and museums. The field of activity open to them was drastically narrowed, regulated, and monitored, and their personal lives were subject to strict rules, relating even to such fundamental matters as housekeeping, choice of partner, and marriage. What came as an especially hard blow was the expulsion of Jewish school children and students from schools and universities, which occurred after the summer holidays of 1941, when trips to the beach, swimming, and other forms of outdoor recreation had been tightly restricted. In thirty-four large towns and cities, separate 'Jewish' primary and secondary schools had been established. A special Jewish teacher training school was set up in Amsterdam.⁵³ Pupils who lived in other parts of the country had to commute, but restrictions on travel and other hurdles were overcome in creative ways. Jewish teachers who had been expelled from their previous positions gave the lessons and were glad that at least they could provide the children with regular education. But, as one of them said later, 'none of the people involved had any suspicion that the establishment of a school system was another form of camouflage'.54

Social and cultural institutions and associations were likewise forced to expel their Jewish members. By order of the occupying regime, Jewish organizations were placed under the authority of the Jewish Council. Institutions for the physically or mentally ill, orphans, and the elderly were merged by the Council into the Jewish Association for Care and Nursing (Joodse Vereniging voor Verzorging en Verpleging). 55 Jews were no longer permitted to participate in cultural or leisure activities or sports with non-Jews either. That made it necessary for them to establish separate Jewish hotels, cafés, and restaurants and segregated the worlds of sport, music, and entertainment. Amsterdam acquired a Jewish Symphony Orchestra (Joodsch Symfonie Orkest), and the Hollandsche Schouwburg (Holland Theatre, later known as the Joodsche Schouwburg, Jewish Theatre) was set up as a Jewish theatre for revue, cabaret, and theatrical performances. Jewish musicians and other performing artists who had been dismissed from their previous jobs threw themselves into building a cultural life for their own community. In that troubled autumn of 1941 there was great demand for their work, and their efforts bore fruit—to the benefit of both the visitors, who had to show identity papers marked with J as a requirement for admission, and the performers, who enjoyed being able to use their skills and talents in spite of everything.⁵⁶ It was briefly unimaginable that, from 20 July 1942 to 19 November 1943, the Hollandsche

⁵³ H. Wielek, *De oorlog die Hitler won* (Amsterdam, 1947), 115–16.

⁵⁴ According to Hartog Beem, who invested a great deal of energy in Jewish education there after his dismissal as a secondary school teacher of German: Beem, *De Joden van Leeuwarden*, 252.

⁵⁵ Berkley, Overzicht, 26-7.

⁵⁶ H. van Gelder and J. Klöters, *Door de nacht klinkt een lied: Amusement in Nederland 1940–1945* (Amsterdam, 1985), 51.

Schouwburg would be the Amsterdam holding centre for Jews awaiting deportation (PLATE 64).⁵⁷

Segregation had a third component, alongside the limitation of personal freedom of movement and exclusion from social life, namely measures aimed at making it impossible for Jews to participate in the economy beyond bare subsistence. A series of prohibitions against working in the liberal professions exploited antisemitic prejudice about imagined Jewish dominance in those sectors. Jewish traders were barred from cattle markets and street trading. Jewish shops and companies were expropriated under an ordinance of March 1941 and placed in the hands of administrators (Verwalters), generally German sympathizers.⁵⁸ These profiteers were led by the German trust company Omnia-Treuhand, which reviewed which businesses, down to the smallest ragand-bone shops, would make suitable targets for this form of organized theft. For wage-earning Jewish workers, the occupying regime abolished the legal protection of employment contracts, and they were required to forfeit their pension entitlements in return for a token sum. The Jewish Council launched a vocational retraining programme, in an attempt to address the problems of the ever-growing group of unemployed Jews. Het Joodsche Weekblad announced training courses for domestic service (in Jewish households only), nursing, child care, social work (in Jewish institutions only), and in branches of industry such as textiles and clothing production, woodworking, electrical engineering, lens manufacturing, and baking.

Crucial measures for the expropriation of Jewish property followed in August 1941. The first was an ordinance requiring Jews to transfer their bank balances to the Amsterdam 'bank' of Lippmann, Rosenthal & Co. in Sarphatistraat. The occupying regime had created this organization, which soon became known as LiRo, to gain control of Jews' total assets so that they could take possession of them. The second measure provided for the expropriation of all parcels of land in the Netherlands that were wholly or partly in the possession of Jews. ⁵⁹ A supplementary ordinance laid claim to Jews' household possessions, which they were no longer free to remove from their own homes. These measures forced the Jews in the twentieth-century Netherlands into a situation that has often been compared to the ghettos of other countries in earlier times. The residents of such ghettos were generally shut out of society. Yet there they were allowed to go on with their lives in isolation, in the calculated self-interest of the outside world. Although many Jews from all over the Netherlands were forced to resettle in the areas of Amsterdam designated as Jewish, no formal ghetto was

F. P. I. M. van Vree, H. Berg, and D. Duindam (eds.), De Hollandse Schouwburg: Theater, deportatieplaats, plek van herinnering (Amsterdam, 2013).
 Ordinance 48/1941 of 12 Mar. 1941.

⁵⁹ G. Aalders, Roof: De ontvreemding van joods bezit tijdens de Tweede Wereldoorlog (The Hague, 1999), on the establishment of LIRO, 149–69; see also Veraart, Ontrechting en rechtsherstel, 48–56, and R. Grüter, Strijd om gerechtigheid: Joodse verzekeringstegoeden en de Tweede Wereldoorlog (Amsterdam, 2015). For the practical details of robbery and the denial of rights at the local level, see M. de Hes, Land loopt niet weg: Drie eeuwen Joods sociaaleconomisch leven in Hoogeveen (Voorburg, 1994).

established there.⁶⁰ The occupiers had no need of one. That was because their policy of segregating the Jews was not aimed simply at isolation, but at a further objective, which the Germans announced to the Jewish population in June 1942: the forced complete removal of all Jews from the Netherlands.

Open Season

All Dutch Jews shared the alarming experience of being cut off from society from one moment to the next. Non-Jews were aware that Jews were no longer fellow citizens and that it was no longer permissible even to regard them as fellow human beings. Even people of good will became psychologically distanced from their Jewish compatriots faster than they would have liked. They saw that the Nazis were clearly going after the Jews. Non-Jews who kept their mouths shut and did not resist would be safe for the time being, while Jews who obeyed the authorities put themselves in especially great danger. The occupying regime continued its policy of intimidation, with new round-ups, beginning with two in Amsterdam in June 1941. The Germans claimed that these were reprisals for resistance activities. More than 300 Jewish men were deported to Mauthausen, where they were worked to death. The anti-Jewish activities then shifted to other areas of the country.

In July and August 1941 a new wave of anti-Jewish violence swept the country. Dutch Nazis attacked synagogues and other buildings belonging to Jewish congregations. In Deventer, they smashed the contents of the synagogue to pieces. A crowd of outraged citizens gathered, but they were dispersed by the police. Similar atrocities took place in Amersfoort, Apeldoorn, Beverwijk, Borculo, The Hague, and Hengelo (Overijssel). In Goor, a Jewish physician's wife was killed.⁶² The Germans then retook the initiative from their Dutch accomplices, claiming that just as in Amsterdam, these had been responses to acts of the resistance. On the night of 13 to 14 September assault vans arrived in Oldenzaal, Enschede, Hengelo, and a few smaller communities. One hundred and five Jewish men were arrested and deported to Mauthausen; the first death notices arrived only a few weeks later. 63 The synagogue council of the Orthodox congregation in Enschede commemorated the dead with the exhortation 'that we, despite all the disasters and misfortunes, cannot and must not let ourselves be defeated; we must go on, with our eyes on the future'.64 More round-ups followed a few weeks later, this time in Gelderland. Dozens of men were taken from Apeldoorn, Doesburg, Rheden, and Arnhem.

⁶⁰ De Jong, Het Koninkrijk, v. 1102.

⁶¹ Bauman, Modernity and the Holocaust, 125.

⁶² Van Baalen, *De joodse gemeente te Deventer*, 86–7; see also Michman, Beem, and Michman, *Pinkas*, 361.

⁶³ M. J. Schenkel, De Twentse Paradox: De lotgevallen van de Joodse bevolking van Hengelo en Enschede tijdens de Tweede Wereldoorlog (Zutphen, 2003), 66–8 and 147–50 (list of names).

⁶⁴ L. F. van Zuylen, De joodse gemeenschap te Enschede 1930–1945 (Hengelo, 1983), 34.

As the victims of these round-ups were deported and murdered, many Jews feared for the future, but some of them encountered few difficulties in their everyday lives. In the months prior to July 1942, when the systematic deportations began, Jewish community life became, if possible, even more intense. Education for Jewish children, vocational training and retraining, Jewish religious education for young adults, and a reorientation towards Jewish identity were elements of a survival strategy and attempts to give meaning to life in isolation. The hope of firmly anchoring this new sense of community was soon dashed, however, by Nazi policies aimed at rendering life impossible for Jews. This was the bitter tragedy of Jewish leaders in the Netherlands and throughout Europe; they hoped to save lives and give life new meaning, but could not stave off death.

At the local level, an important role was played by Jewish dignitaries, the members of church councils, and prominent figures in associational life and charity work. In the Jewish historian Jaap Meijer's reflections on the history of the Jews in the Netherlands, he accused these dignitaries of focusing too much of their attention on integration and status before the war and therefore lacking a full understanding of the meaning of the living faith that should have held the Jewish community together. Meijer claimed that was why Jewish life had disintegrated in the first half of the twentieth century, to the detriment of the community's resilience during the Holocaust. ⁶⁶ This view ignores the fact that Dutch society—including the Jewish part—was in rapid flux. Many Jewish dignitaries embodied the ideals of emancipation and integration. ⁶⁷ They believed in the combination of Dutch and Jewish identity and were convinced that greater detachment from religion did not necessarily have to lead to a complete break with Judaism. ⁶⁸ But the everyday experience of persecution made it clear just how little protection their integration afforded them.

The insight and temperament of local Jewish leaders played a central role during the Holocaust. The freethinker Lodewijk Ernst Visser took up the presidency of the congregation in The Hague out of a sense of duty. The president of the synagogue board in Enschede, the manufacturer Sigmund Nathan Menko, had taken an independent line, even before the war, towards the Permanent Commission of the NIK in Amsterdam. The round-ups in the autumn of 1941 convinced Menko—in stark contrast to the Jewish Council leaders in Amsterdam—that it was vital to prepare for going into

⁶⁵ It was Jewish medical doctors, above all, who had to contend with these experiences and dilemmas; see H. van den Ende, 'Vergeet niet dat je arts bent': Joodse artsen in Nederland 1940–1945 (Amsterdam, 2015).

⁶⁶ According to J. Meijer, *Hoge hoeden, lage standaarden: De Nederlandse joden tussen 1933 en 1940* (Baarn, 1969); Meijer's findings were used and confirmed in the making of numerous regional and local studies of Jewish communities, such as those of Enschede and Meppel.

⁶⁷ E. Gans, Jaap en Ischa Meijer: Een Joodse geschiedenis 1912–1956 (Amsterdam, 2008), 36–7.

⁶⁸ B. Braber, This Cannot Happen Here: Integration and Jewish Resistance in the Netherlands, 1940–1945 (Amsterdam, 2013), 65.

hiding, so he set that process in motion.⁶⁹ In contrast, his counterpart in Meppel, the businessman Moritz Lobstein, held in great esteem for his social prestige and erudition, told his followers that they should be guided by Jewish tradition. As the representative of the Jewish Council in Drenthe, he insisted on obedience to the authorities. But his hope that this would forestall greater evil proved unfounded.⁷⁰

Jews in the upper crust of Dutch society observed, all too often, that the non-Jews around them did not rise up in protest against segregation. Jewish industrialists, whole-salers, and legal experts formed clandestine discussion groups to decide how to respond and look for ways out. These gatherings became involved in community life, organizing courses and clubs. The life of Jews outside the major cities, especially in rural areas, was relatively placid at first. According to local chroniclers, people went about their work as usual—as long as Jews had not been barred from their occupations—'showed themselves as little as possible', unless forced into the open by the occupiers, and 'lived one day at time', which is certainly not to say that they had peace of mind. The Jewish workers and shopkeepers in the cities, who had not led easy lives even before the war, were plunged into the depths of poverty and depended on assistance from the Jewish Council. In the countryside, it was easier for Jews to meet their basic needs thanks to odd jobs and help from their neighbours.

Chief rabbis such as Abraham Salomon Levisson in Leeuwarden, Abraham Barend (A. B. N.) Davids in Rotterdam, and Philip Frank in Haarlem tried to place Jewish social and cultural life on a religious footing. These rabbis provided leadership mainly in their own, religious sphere and endeavoured to console and inspire the faithful. They reached the believers but not the larger group who had no ties to the synagogues. A few rabbis were also local representatives of the Jewish Council, but their role was more to carry out the Council's decisions than to contribute to them. Frank, the chief rabbi in North Holland, met with a dreadful fate. In reprisal for an attack on a German officer in Haarlem, the German occupiers shot him dead on 2 February 1942, along with the representative of the Jewish Council, Herbert Otto Drilsma; the president of Haarlem's NIK congregation, Haarlem Barend Chapon; and seven imprisoned communists.

Religious leaders are said to have had little direct influence over the actual policies of the Jewish Council presidents, staff, and representatives. ⁷³ Their vocation prescribed their role under the extreme circumstances of the Holocaust. Chief Rabbi Davids was a vocal advocate of the Zionist movement, which did not have widespread support in the Netherlands but offered a belief in a Jewish ideal for the future. The struggle for that

⁶⁹ Schenkel, *De Twentse Paradox*, 124, and F. A. Demant, 'Verre Buren: Samenleven in de schaduw van de Holocaust' (doctoral thesis, University of Amsterdam, 2015), 215–18.

S. C. Derksen, Opkomst en ondergang van een toonaangevende joodse gemeente: 200 jaar joods leven in Meppel
 (Meppel, 1988), 311–12.
 I. Kisch, quoted in De Jong, Het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden, xiv. 280–2.

⁷² W. S. van Dinter, De joden van Gennep 1650–1950 (Zutphen, 1990), 76; S. Laansma, De joodse gemeenten in de kop van Overijssel (Zutphen, 1981), 94; Derksen, Opkomst en ondergang, 318.

⁷³ D. Michman, 'Problems of Religious Life in the Netherlands during the Holocaust', DJH i. 379–99: 395–7.

ideal could be a source of courage and self-respect.⁷⁴ In the words of a private diary entry from August 1941: 'So what remains are Jewish lives, and what matters is to make those lives damned Jewish and bloody nationalist, so that one day we can found our own state in the land that awaits us.'⁷⁵ Zionism remained the cause of an active minority. The leaders of the Jewish Council gave this movement the opportunity for cultural activities but felt threatened by its criticism of the Council's policies.

As a result of oppression, synagogues and religion were a stronger binding force in Jewish communities than they had been, a development also seen in the other religious groups in the Netherlands. Yet controversies did not always sort themselves out naturally; take, for example, the slow-moving and fairly unproductive discussions of potential cooperation or merger between Orthodox and Reform leaders. 76 Het Joodsche Weekblad also spread the message of faith in divine assistance and refamiliarized its readers with the notion where necessary. A typical article from May 1941 emphasized that the Jews had overcome centuries of adversity time and again through their faith in God. It was clear in retrospect, the author concluded, 'how the Jewish people [had] persevered in their work on themselves and their future, even when they were biting their lips with pain and emotion'.77 Although the occupying regime did not outlaw Jewish religious life, it did raise barriers. That began with the prohibition on ritual slaughter. Although at some stage that was apparently no longer enforced, 78 the changing assortment of foods available and the rationing system did make it increasingly difficult to prepare food in accordance with Jewish laws. The rabbis, each of whom was free to rule on what would be permitted under dietary laws in his own region, could not arrive at a collective position on the application of those laws under the emergency conditions.

The fear of pogroms and attacks on synagogues was relentless and led congregations to take steps to protect their Torah scrolls and other consecrated objects from desecration and destruction as well as they could. In The Hague, the Torah ark was hidden in the Gemeentemuseum after an unsuccessful attack on the synagogue. After the attack, Visser, as the church council president, opposed the proposal to close the main synagogue. The following Friday evening, he strolled pointedly down Wagenstraat, 'had the doors of the synagogue opened, and assumed full responsibility for doing so'.⁷⁹

⁷⁴ De Wolff, Geschiedenis der Joden in Nederland, 50–1; cf. Michman, Beem, and Michman, Pinkas, 510.

⁷⁵ Quoted in J. Hagedoorn et al. (eds.), Als een strootje in de maalstroom: Zwolle tijdens de Tweede Wereldoorlog (Zwolle, 1985), 121.

⁷⁶ D. Michman, *Het liberale Jodendom in Nederland 1929–1943* (Amsterdam, 1988), 135–7; for a more recent study of the Liberal movement, see Chaja Brasz, *In de tenten van Jaakov. Impressies van 75 jaar progressief Jodendom in Nederland 1931–2006* (Amsterdam, 2006).

⁷⁷ S. Pinkhof, 'Waarde in onszelf', in Het Joodsche Weekblad, 5–9 May 1941 (12 Iyar 5701), 1–3.

⁷⁸ D. Michman, 'Problems of Religious Life', 385.

⁷⁹ I. B. van Creveld, De verdwenen buurt: Drie eeuwen centrum van joods Den Haag (The Hague, 1989), 207.

Deportation Begins: The Yellow Star

On Wednesday, 29 April 1942, the presidents of the Jewish Council were summoned to an audience with SS Hauptsturmführer Ferdinand Hugo Aus der Fünten, one of the Germans coordinating the persecution of the Jews in the Netherlands. Cohen and Asscher were informed that, from Sunday, 3 May onwards, Jews would be required to wear a yellow star on their clothing when in public (PLATE 65). The Jewish Council was required to arrange for the distribution of the badges at once. The presidents were shocked, and protested forcefully—Cohen called it 'a terrible day in the history of the Jews in the Netherlands'. 80 Nevertheless, they decided to cooperate for fear of reprisals if Jews did not begin wearing the stars by the prescribed date. When the measure was made public, people barely had time to decide how to respond. Should they resign themselves to this new humiliation along with all the others, or was it crucial for them to wear the star 'with pride', in the words of Leo Baeck, the leader of the Jews in Germany?81 Immediately after the requirement entered into force, a few Jews who chose not to wear stars were betrayed to the authorities. 82 Those who did wear them displayed a variety of emotions when out on the street: embarrassment, pride, awkwardness, or indifference. The reactions of other Dutch people in those early days of the prohibition were equally varied. The best of them showed compassion and solidarity; in Deventer, students from the colonial agriculture school marched through the city, wearing stars with labels like 'Reformed', 'Catholic', and so forth. 83 As punishment, the German authorities sent twenty-three of them to the penal camp in Amersfoort for several weeks.84

At that stage, it was difficult to face the fact that this measure marked a shift in the persecutors' objective, from segregation to deportation. The introduction of the star was the final step in segregation and marked the beginning of deportation. In a confidential document for his senior officials, dated 2 July 1942, Reichskommissar Arthur Seyss-Inquart, the leader of the German occupying regime in the Netherlands, explained this measure. He wrote in so many words that the requirement to wear the star applied to all Jews who were 'eligible for emigration'. *S 'Emigration' was a euphemism for the forced departure of the Jews from the Netherlands—in other words, deportation. In Nazi Germany, 'emigration' was how the leaders had first thought they could solve the 'Jewish problem'—at least in part. Since 1933 some 537,000 German Jews, robbed of their homes and possessions, had been permitted to leave Germany;

Documenten van de jodenvervolging in Nederland 1940–1945, publication of the Jewish Historical Museum,
 Amsterdam (Amsterdam, 1979), 55.
 Herzberg, Kroniek, 65.

Lodewijk Ernst Visser's son was among those arrested and deported, with fatal consequences; see De
 Jong, Het Koninkrijk, v. 1089.
 Van Baalen, De joodse gemeente te Deventer, 87.

⁸⁴ G. von Frijtag Drabbe Künzel, Kamp Amersfoort (Amsterdam, 2003), 61.

⁸⁵ According to a secret letter from Seyss-Inquart to the Generalkommissare, 2 July 1942, quoted by De Jong, *Het Koninkrijk*, v. 1081.

almost 15,000 had come to the Netherlands. In 1940 and 1941, at most 1,000 Dutch Jews were allowed to emigrate, and only after paying large sums in hard currency, diamonds, or jewellery.⁸⁶

In October 1941 the persecutors closed off that escape route. The conquest of Poland and much of the Soviet Union had led to a dramatic change of direction in Nazi Germany's plans for the Jews. Behind the front lines of the advancing German armies, Jews and other residents of the newly occupied areas were massacred. In August and September 1941 alone, Einsatzgruppen (death squads of German police officers) and units from the Waffen-SS (the military branch of the SS)—acting on the personal orders of Heinrich Himmler, the Reichsführer or SS commander—shot tens of thousands of Jewish men, women, and children in targeted mass executions. 87 The Nazis had persistently shown their animosity towards the Jews and their determination to rid the world of them. These organized mass murders in the wake of the German advance on the Russian front showed that the persecutors were willing to overstep all conceivable limits.88 The next stage was the forced relocation of the Jews from occupied Europe to the newly conquered territories, where the most radical Nazis presided over a merciless reign of terror, setting up ghettos and concentration and extermination camps.89 The Endlösung, what the Nazis described as the 'Final Solution to the Jewish Question', was taking shape. For the time being, it was camouflaged as forced Auswanderung ('emigration') to eastern Europe.

A variety of German organizations were involved in the preparations to deport the Jews in the Netherlands; the leadership of the operation gradually came into the hands of the SS and the police. These persecutors used diverse means of compulsion, driving people towards deportation and death with bureaucratic rules, deception, brutal intimidation, and lethal force. Although these organs of the Nazi state sometimes competed with one another, their joint efforts had a catastrophic impact on their victims. The general orders on the persecution of Jews came from Berlin, from the IV B 4 division of the Reichssicherheitshauptamt (Reich Main Security Office, the secret

⁸⁶ De Jong, *Het Koninkrijk*, v. 1008–9; Aalders, *Roof: De ontvreemding van joods bezit tijdens de Tweede Wereldoorlog*, on temporary exemptions and emigration stamps for Jews who turned in valuable foreign currency, jewellery, and securities (*c*.400–500 cases); most of these Jews ended up in Bergen-Belsen (ibid. 237–45).

⁸⁷ Snyder, Bloodlands, 197-9.

⁸⁸ R. Gerwarth, Hitlers beul: Leven en dood van Reinhard Heydrich 1904–1942 (Amsterdam, 2011), 269 ff.

⁸⁹ Emigration policy was implemented by the Reichssicherheitshauptamt (Reich Main Security Office) led by Reinhard Heydrich under the authority of the Reichsführer-SS, Heinrich Himmler. See R. Breitman, *The Architect of Genocide: Himmler and the Final Solution* (London, 1991), 230–1; P. Longerich, *Heinrich Himmler: Hitlers belangrijkste handlanger* (Amsterdam, 2009), 545 ff.; for discussion of the decision-making process leading to the murder of the Jews, see Kershaw, *Der NS-Staat*, ch. 5, 'Hitler und der Holocaust', 165–208, and Burrin, *Het ontstaan van een volkerenmoord*.

⁹⁰ J. Boas, 'De misleidingstactieken van de nazi's bij de liquidatie van de Europese joden', in N. D. J. Barnouw et al. (eds.), *Oorlogsdocumentatie '40-'45: Vijfde Jaarboek van het Rijksinstituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie* (Zutphen, 1994), 69–96.

police, security, and intelligence agency). This organization, led by Adolf Eichmann, organized and carried out the deportations throughout Europe. A sub-department with the same name was established in The Hague, operating alongside the Zentral-stelle für Jüdische Auswanderung (Central Office for Jewish Emigration) in Amsterdam, under the day-to-day leadership of Hauptsturmführer Aus der Fünten. This organization was charged with making sure that the Jews in the Netherlands reported for deportation, and IV B 4 then had to arrange for their removal from the Netherlands. The official head of the Zentralstelle was Willy Lages, the chief of the German police in Amsterdam. Lages and Aus der Fünten generally stayed in contact with the presidents of the Jewish Council. Elsewhere in the Netherlands, regional German police chiefs organized the persecution of the Jews and gave orders to the local branches of the Jewish Council. ⁹¹

Forced Relocation and Labour Camps

In the period leading up to the deportations, the requirement to wear a star was accompanied by other coercive anti-Jewish measures: in particular, forced relocation to Amsterdam and the formation of labour camps for Jews (known in Dutch as werk-verruimingskampen). In early 1942 the Jewish residents of Zaandam, various coastal towns and cities, and the province of Zeeland were instructed by the Dutch police by order of the Germans to resettle in one of three Amsterdam neighbourhoods designated as 'Jewish' (Plate 68). These 'evacuees' were not allowed to take more than hand luggage and had to turn over the keys to their homes to the police. Jewish Council staff members helped them to look for housing in Amsterdam. ⁹² Those who were unable to find a place to stay in the city were 'billeted' under the authority of the mayor. In 1942 North Holland and part of Utrecht were declared off-limits for Jews. In April 1943 Jews were banned from the other provinces as well and forced to go to the camps in Westerbork and Vught.

The many restrictions left more and more Jews jobless. The Rijksarbeidsbureau (National Labour Office), part of the Department of Social Affairs, began setting up special labour camps—initially for Jews in Amsterdam—in January 1942 at the instigation of the German authorities. People assigned to this *werkverruiming* (work creation) programme were allowed to keep their unemployment benefits, minus 15 per cent. Men between the ages of 18 and 55 could sign up voluntarily, but few felt inclined to do so. The summonses sent by the provincial labour office in Amsterdam threatened the recipients with serious consequences if they refused to participate: deportation to

M. Croes and P. Tammes, 'Gif laten wij niet voortbestaan': Een onderzoek naar de overlevingskansen van joden in de Nederlandse gemeenten, 1940–1945 (Amsterdam, 2004), ch. 3, 'Sicherheitspolizei en Sicherheitsdienst', 65–259.
 Bottema, Ze waren onder ons, 120–5.

Mauthausen.⁹³ The Germans also insisted that summonses be sent to some men who had not lost their jobs (yet), to bring the total to the required number. Heads of households were sometimes promised that if they volunteered, their families would be left undisturbed.

Nonetheless, the summonses caused great distress among the recipients. When fifty-nine men were ordered to report for departure in Leeuwarden, one of them took the lives of his family and killed himself. The chief rabbi tried to allay the fears of the rest of the group at a special service, telling them they were allowed to break dietary laws in an emergency. The German authorities there would not allow friends or neighbours to accompany the 'departers' to the train. Their departure was meant to be swathed in secrecy, as much as possible, and was therefore scheduled for 7 a.m., as was the funeral of the dead family. The labour camps had an unmistakable aura of menace. Those who were summoned were separated from their families, subjected to strict discipline, and rarely, if ever, allowed to go on leave.

By this stage, the establishment of these camps in the Netherlands had become very important to the leaders of the Jewish Council. By assisting in the process of summoning Jews for 'work creation programmes', they hoped to avoid new roundups. Jewish leaders believed they could save their community by having its members work for the Germans. That was why, in January 1942, Asscher and Cohen published a statement in *Het Joodsche Weekblad* calling on recipients of a summons to comply 'in their own enlightened self-interest'. 95 Jewish Council members were exempt, a fact that created ill will, especially in Amsterdam. Many Jews there had grown up in the tradition of the labour movement, and they accused the Council of class politics. From January 1942 onwards, 7,500 Jews from throughout the country were forced to work in the camps; in retrospect, we might describe such cases as pre-deportations. 96 Internees in the labour camps were ripe for the taking, and their persecutors seized the opportunity soon afterwards, in October 1942, evacuating the camps and relocating the internees to Westerbork, followed by their families. 97 In short, the labour camps were an intermediate stop in a series of deportations.

 $^{^{93}}$ Example of a summons, 22 Sept. 1942, collection of the Jewish Historical Museum, with thanks to R. Weissmann RA for the reference.

⁹⁴ Beem, De joden van Leeuwarden, 266–7; S. de Jong, Joods leven in de Friese hoofdstad 1920–1945 voltooid verleden tijd (Leeuwarden, 1970), 71–2.

⁹⁵ Het Joodsche Weekblad, 9 Jan. 1942 (20 Tevet 5702). See also Bauman, Modernity and the Holocaust, 137–8.

⁹⁶ Derksen, Opkomst en ondergang, 312.

⁹⁷ That had already become clear in June 1941, when the Germans, by means of a ruse contrived by Willy Lages, had rounded up the residents of a work camp for Palestine pioneers in the Wieringermeer, who were staying in Amsterdam at the time, and sent them to Mauthausen; see De Jong, *Het Koninkrijk*, v. 549–53. See also the letter of 24 Sept. 1942 from Rauter to Himmler, in which Rauter wrote that they had not yet cleared out the work camps in the expectation that people would flee there and then the residents and the families they had left behind could be arrested all at once. Published in *Documenten van de jodenvervolging*, 90; for an

In the first half of 1942 a series of German measures limited Jews' freedom of movement to a minimum. Jews were no longer allowed to use bicycles, cars, public transport, or telephones, and they were forbidden to enter the homes of non-Jews. The curfew for Jews was extended and lasted from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. They were allowed to go shopping only at certain times and in a very few shops. In March 1942 they were forbidden to marry non-Jews or have sexual intercourse out of wedlock. In October, people in mixed marriages were required to register. Compliance with these prohibitions was strictly enforced, by order of the occupying regime, with the continual threat of deportation to Mauthausen as punishment. Jewish life was thus suffocated through confinement to an ever tinier space. 98

The next step was to rob the Jews of everything they owned. In February 1942 they lost almost all control over the assets they had deposited with LiRo; from that time on, they were not permitted to have more than small sums of money on their person. In May, the registration and valuation of all their property began. The Zentralstelle demanded assistance from the Jewish Council. Jews in the Netherlands still vividly recalled the registration of the property of German Jewish refugees, who by this time had been declared stateless, and the instructions that followed in November 1941 for them to report for emigration. Yet the Council decided to comply with the Germans' demands, as long as it was the case, as Aus der Fünten had intimated, that registration would not necessarily lead to forced emigration. What the Jewish Council was not told was that Seyss-Inquart had announced the day before, in a secret decree, that the movable property of the Jews to be deported would be seized by German institutions.

On 20 June 1942, Eichmann issued instructions from Berlin that deportations from the Netherlands, Belgium, and France must begin in July or August. The objective was to remove all Jews from those countries. In preparation, Westerbork refugee camp was designated as a transit camp for Jews from the Netherlands. It was removed from the purview of the Department of Justice and placed under the authority of the Befehlshaber der Sicherheitspolizei und des Sicherheitsdienstes (commander of the Security Police and Security Services) in the Netherlands. Work had begun earlier on increasing the camp's holding capacity. Aus der Fünten transmitted the deportation order to the Jewish Council in a disguised form. On Friday, 26 June 1942, after the sabbath had

account of the operation, in which 12,296 people were arrested and transported to Westerbork, see L. De Jong, *Het Koninkrijk*, vi. 235–40.

⁹⁸ One example: in June 1942, the Jewish Leeuwarden resident Herman Wallenga bought a bag of apples in a greengrocer's shop five minutes after the end of the period in which Jews were permitted there. An NSB member reported this to the SD, which arrested Wallenga not long afterwards in his home. The notice of his death from Auschwitz dates from 13 Aug. 1942; S. De Jong, *Joods leven in de Friese hoofdstad*, 63. By contrast, 'not being allowed to go into shops was not a problem in Aalten. Everyone was happy to help. Groceries were even brought to us at home. One person would bring chicken and another bread. In Aalten there were ways of living with those prohibitions, unlike in Amsterdam.' Quoted in P. Lurvink, *De joodse gemeente in Aalten: Een geschiedenis 1630–1945* (Zutphen, 1991), 153.

begun, he informed them that the Zentralstelle had decided to summon Jews for a 'work creation programme in Germany under police supervision'. The following Monday, the newspapers reported that Generalkommissar Fritz Schmidt, a leader of the occupying regime, had said that the Jews would 'go back to where they came from, as poor as when they left'. When Asscher and Cohen asked Aus der Fünten for a reaction, the head of the Zentralstelle would not contradict Schmidt's statement. ¹⁰⁰

Organization and Selection

The persecutors designed all sorts of bureaucratic procedures for carrying out the deportation of the Jews. Brute force and the threat of Mauthausen were used to ensure meek obedience. Besides intimidation, the occupying regime also used techniques of deception to mask its true intentions for as long as possible. ¹⁰¹ They wanted to proceed with the deportations quickly, but also carefully. It was vital to the Germans, for the sake of efficiency, to make the victims assist in their own deportation. The Jewish Council played a key role in this plan—a role its leaders did not choose, but were forced into step by step. On the eve of the deportations, the Jews had collectively been taken hostage; although still on Dutch soil, they had been expelled from Dutch society (PLATE 66). These were needy, helpless people, who by this stage almost entirely lacked the means for collective or individual resistance. Their plight made it possible to guard and supervise them without a great deal of German manpower. ¹⁰²

Aus der Fünten obtained the assistance of the Jewish Council by pledging that certain categories of Jews would be provisionally exempt from deportation: specifically, the people essential to the continuation of Jewish community life until the deportations had been completed, such as staff members of the Jewish Council. The Jewish Council was made to determine case by case whether the people summoned were eligible for exemption. Unsurprisingly, Jewish Council positions became highly coveted as a means of avoiding deportation. Its leaders created all sorts of new duties and departments so that it could rapidly increase its staff size. But the number of exemptions, also known by the German terms *Sperren* and *Rückstellungen*, was not unlimited. No more than 17,500 people could be exempted on the grounds of indispensability to the Jewish community. In the summer of 1942, when the deportations were first set in motion, the German authorities had been willing to allow provisional exemptions for around 25,000 Jews, including those who worked in companies important to the German war effort, as well as baptized Jews and Jews in mixed marriages. 103

¹⁰⁰ Ibid. vi. 1–3; Herzberg, Kroniek, 135–9; Presser, Ondergang, i. 245–50.

¹⁰¹ Boas, 'De misleiding bij de Holocaust', 80–1. ¹⁰² Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust*, 118.

¹⁰³ De Jong, *Het Koninkrijk*, vi. 272–3; for a discussion of the German stance on exemptions, see ibid. 226–33, as well as J. Th. M. Houwink ten Cate, 'Het jongere deel: Demografische and sociale kenmerken van het jodendom in Nederland tijdens de vervolging', in *Oorlogsdocumentatie*, vol. i (Zutphen, 1989), 16–35.

From early 1942 onwards, people were summoned to report for registration of their property and departure for Westerbork. Desperation took hold throughout the community. The punishment for non-compliance was well known: certain death in Mauthausen. 104 Nevertheless, in the early days, fewer than two-thirds of the people who had been summoned actually reported for deportation in Amsterdam, The Hague, and Rotterdam. 105 The Germans, taken by surprise, resorted to the method of massive round-ups (razzias). In Amsterdam they took several hundred Jews hostage. At this stage, Asscher and Cohen were personally confronted with the mortal fear of the people for whom they were responsible. The persecutors compelled them to publish a statement in Het Joodsche Weekblad urging everyone who had been summoned to report for deportation. After they did so, most of the hostages were released. This was typical of the process by which the occupiers would strong-arm the Jewish Council into complying with their wishes: they allowed them to spare some people at the expense of others.

The first train involved in the deportation plan carried 962 people from Amsterdam Central Station to Westerbork on the night of 14 to 15 July 1942. From Westerbork, the first 1,135 people—mostly German Jews—were sent on to Auschwitz on 15 July. Up to 3 September 1942, over a period of more than a year, more than 93,000 Jews from the Netherlands were deported to extermination camps, a total that would eventually reach 107,000. The first half of 1943 the country as a whole had been declared off-limits for Jews; the remaining Jewish residents were relocated to Amsterdam, to Westerbork, or to Vught, where a transit camp for Jews had been set up as part of the concentration camp. From 14 May 1943 onwards, the only Jews still allowed to live in Amsterdam were those with a provisional exemption from deportation.

The Jews did not meekly allow themselves to be sent to Westerbork or Vught and then expelled from the Netherlands. Many people did not show up for deportation at first. Their persecutors responded with even harsher intimidation and by honing their methods and organization. Special units of fanatical Dutch 'Jew hunters' were set up in police forces in Amsterdam and The Hague to track down the people who had not turned up.¹⁰⁷ At the same time, the process of reporting for deportation became more coercive in character. The summons no longer instructed the recipients to report to a central place; instead, they were to wait at home until the German and Dutch police

¹⁰⁴ Van der Leeuw, 'Meer slachtoffers dan elders in West-Europa'.

¹⁰⁵ Of the 2,000 Jews ordered to report to a gathering place in the harbour on 30 July, 1,120 went there; three days later, 800 out of 2,000 who had been summoned made an appearance; and after a third summons, 520 out of 2,000 turned up (F. Van Riet, *Handhaven onder de nieuwe orde: De politieke geschiedenis van de Rotterdamse politie tijdens de Tweede Wereldoorlog* (Zaltbommel, 2008), 234–6). In The Hague, fewer than 1,200 of the 4,000 people summoned actually reported to the gathering place (B. van der Boom, *Den Haag in de Tweede Wereldoorlog* (The Hague, 1995), 163–4). There were no round-ups in the streets there, but there were targeted searches at home addresses.

¹⁰⁷ A. van Liempt, Kopgeld: Nederlandse premiejagers op zoek naar Joden 1943 (Amsterdam, 2002).

came to pick them, and they received a summons as a mere formality. To make matters worse, many round-ups, raids, and pick-ups for deportation were planned for the date, or the eve, of a Jewish holiday. Jews awaited deportation in debilitating uncertainty and dread, as their friends, families, and fellow schoolchildren disappeared.

While awaiting a summons, it was impossible to picture what lay ahead. Fleeing and hiding were the only ways of escaping the fate the enemy had in store. According to Herzberg, most Jews in the Netherlands tended to underestimate the dangers associated with deportation and overestimate the risks of going into hiding. The people ordered to report for deportation had no way of knowing what would happen beyond Westerbork or Vught. The persecutors left no doubt about their intention to remove Jews from Europe, but they masked the ultimate purpose of the deportations effectively. There were plenty of fearful suspicions, but for most people, it was simply impossible to calculate the best survival strategy rationally. Their bridges to society had been burned, and many other Dutch nationals let it happen. The occupying regime had succeeded in trapping the Jews in its own machinery of power, enlisting the aid of the Dutch public administration and the Jewish Council. It put the Jews under such pressure that hardly any alternatives remained to them.

What their persecutors called 'labour deployment [Arbeidseinsatz] in Germany under police supervision' did not literally have to mean organized mass murder in Silesia or eastern Poland. Some Jews chose to trust that it would not, but even they were frightened by the prospect of leaving their own country for a harsh, primitive life in the work camps. On the other hand, it seemed reasonable to hope that healthy people would find a way to endure and to care for the children, the elderly, and the sick. Many people therefore tried to be tough and to make careful preparations for a future they could not escape. Throughout the Jewish community, people made, bought, or exchanged clothing and equipment for their travels and asked people they trusted to look after the possessions they could not take with them. Sometimes they gave their homes a final cleaning before handing the keys over to the police. Many people took hope from the thought that the war could not go on much longer. In 1942 the Allies announced that they would open a second front in Europe that very year. This did not happen, but the hope remained alive, especially when the conflict turned in their favour in North Africa and on the Russian front. When saying their farewells, many people added: 'It won't for be long.' Those words could express optimism, offer consolation, or—in most cases, probably—suppress anxious forebodings.

When the Jews were summoned for deportation, the Dutch institutions chose to wait and see what would become of them, and most of their fellow nationals remained

¹⁰⁸ Herzberg, Kroniek, 319.

¹⁰⁹ B. van der Boom, 'Wij weten niets van hun lot': Gewone Nederlanders en de Holocaust (Amsterdam, 2012) and the further discussion.

passive. ¹¹⁰ The resistance, including aid to Jews in hiding, did not begin to operate on a large scale until it was already too late for most Jews. The parts of the Dutch public sector involved in the deportations at the behest of the occupying regime—the public administration, the police, the trams, and the railways—did not seek collective strategies for large-scale rescue. Protests were formal in nature and steered clear of the principles at stake in this onslaught on Jewish lives. For example, the above-mentioned Secretary-General Frederiks of the Department of the Interior objected to the manner in which local police forces were used to arrest Jews. He argued that the German authorities should issue their orders not through the mayors in question but directly. The occupying regime was open to the argument that Dutch people's confidence in their own public sector should not be unduly damaged and made some concessions to him in this respect. ¹¹¹

But objections of this kind did not save any Jewish lives and were not even intended to. It is worth noting, however, that Jews in places with Nazi mayors did have poorer chances of survival. 112 As the occupation continued, Dutch antisemites were appointed to more and more public offices, and as early as 1941 a number of NSB mayors decided, without any pressure from the occupying regime, to introduce local measures discriminating against Jewish residents. 113 The Dutch police were also increasingly infected by an impulse towards antisemitic repression and often tried to make life impossible for Jews—sometimes through deception, but more often through harsh repression. 114

Only individual officials and administrators resisted their assigned role. There were 'pre-war' mayors who had their staff warn people to go into hiding when deportations were about to take place. 115 Isolated protests were less effective than secret aid, and those who protested left themselves exposed. Many well-meaning individuals felt it was too dangerous to offer a helping hand. In 1940 and 1941, courageous non-Jews had attempted to protect Jews from provocations and violence by Dutch and German Nazis. In 1942 and 1943, however, it was no longer a question of provocations but of the implementation of a policy that the leaders of the Third Reich had made their highest priority, a policy they were determined to carry through by any means necessary. At that stage, anything less than sabotage or offering a hiding place was no longer helpful. Jews who chose not to report for deportation, and those who aided them, could expect reprisals. People still offered moral support, helping acquaintances prepare

 ¹¹⁰ For the role of 'obedience' among onlookers, see ibid. 415 ff. On the Netherlands under German occupation, see P. Romijn, Der lange Krieg der Niederlande: Besatzung, Gewalt und Neuorientierung in den vierziger Jahre (Göttingen, 2017).
 111 Romijn, Burgemeesters in oorlogstijd, 434–6.

¹¹² Croes and Tammes, 'Gif laten wij niet voortbestaan', 323–4.

¹¹³ Romijn, Burgemeesters in oorlogstijd, 254–5.

¹¹⁴ C. Fijnaut, De geschiedenis van de Nederlandse politie: Een staatsinstelling in de maalstroom van de geschiedenis (Amsterdam, 2007), ch. 5, pp. 545–670; for a local study, see van Riet, Handhaven onder de nieuwe orde; for case studies of particular 'Jew-hunters', see A. van Liempt and J. H. Kompagnie, Jodenjacht: De onthutsende rol van de Nederlandse politie in de Tweede Wereldoorlog (Amsterdam, 2011).

for departure, agreeing to look after their personal possessions, and accompanying them to the train or bus—however heart-rending such scenes might be in retrospect. Of course, others responded with indifference, greed, or numbness. There were also non-Jews who went on corresponding with people they knew in Westerbork or Vught and sending books, food, or clean laundry as long as they could.

The composition of the Jewish Council also had a great impact on how the plans for deportation were carried out. From the position into which they had been forced, the presidents had an incomplete grasp of the situation. They helped to organize the transport of Jews to the camps on the premiss that they really would be put to work in German labour camps—a hard lot, but one that offered some hope of survival. Second, they believed the Jewish Council should be involved in the departure process for as long as possible, so that people would not be dragged away roughly by Nazis. Finally, Asscher and Cohen assumed that the war would not go on much longer. That made it seem realistic to them that the deportees might return home. Essentially, the Jewish Council leaders trusted that by assisting with the German deportations they could extract concessions which would keep at least some of the Jews in the Netherlands. The group left behind could then lay the groundwork for rebuilding Jewish life after the war, for the benefit of the whole community, including the deportees who would then return. They used such narratives about the future to justify their choices and suppress their doubts. The

Asscher and Cohen believed the only way they could succeed was by remaining in dialogue with the German authorities. The Germans likewise felt that dialogue was in their interest, because it would help to ensure that deportations proceeded smoothly. So they made occasional concessions, usually in the form of temporary exemptions. As they did throughout the Holocaust, the Nazis led the victims to believe that their conduct would influence the outcome of the deportation process, and that obedience and 'good behaviour' would be to their benefit. Under these circumstances, the presidents learned to negotiate for the sparing of a few in exchange for the deportation of many. By granting exemptions, the Germans placed them in a diabolical situation. They were permitted to request *Sperren* for certain categories, but in doing so, they seemed to legitimate the mass deportations. ¹¹⁷ It goes without saying that this choice aroused the anger of the less privileged. Furthermore, their approach was unsuccessful, because it was based on rationalizations that proved to be illusions.

The German concessions were limited and temporary in nature. The Zentral-stelle and IV B 4 sometimes withdrew the *Sperren* for a particular group from one day to the next. As the deportations rapidly shrank the Jewish community, the persecutors rescinded 7,000 of the 17,500 exemptions for Jewish Council staff members in May 1943. They gave the presidents the horrific job of deciding which people would lose their protection and be summoned for deportation. The Germans issued serious threats

¹¹⁶ Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust*, 130.
¹¹⁷ Ibid. 131–2.

against the remaining Jews. Intimidated, Asscher and Cohen instructed their staff to make the selection, and their instructions were carried out, despite opposition from some department heads. Council employees went 'wild with rage' when compelled to revoke the exemptions of their friends, family members, and acquaintances, telling Cohen it was 'impossible to carry out this insane butchery'.¹¹⁸

The persecutors had forced the Jewish Council into the very tightest of corners: for the first (and last) time, the organization gave into the pressure and agreed to select people for deportation. 119 When no more than 500 people responded to the summons that followed from the Zentralstelle, the Germans in Amsterdam conducted a round-up so that they could send the desired number of people to Westerbork. The size of the Jewish Council was substantially reduced, and the German authorities decided that from then on they would decide on exemptions directly, rather than going through the Council. In other words, as soon as it became clear that the Council was no longer able to persuade people to report for deportation, it was no longer of any significance to the persecutors.

Fleeing, Hiding, and Resisting

At first, most attempts to escape deportation went through official channels. Some people selected for deportation because of their Jewish ancestry denied that ancestry. This procedure was handled by the German official Dr Hans Georg Calmeyer, who had been authorized to rule on such cases by the Reichskommissar. Calmeyer turned out to be able and willing, to some extent, to protect people from deportation. It cannot be determined how many people were spared by his decisions—he himself has repeatedly stated a figure of 18,000, but the most precise count, based on a study of the official records, yields a total of 3,709 decisions no longer to register a person as a 'full Jew', out of a total of 5,667 applications handled by Calmeyer. He based his decisions on information, generally false, supplied by a few creative lawyers with the courage to take risks for their clients' sake. Furthermore, the Amsterdam anthropologist Dr Arie de Froe supplied Calmeyer with a report in 1943 aimed at scientifically proving that the Portuguese Jews could not be regarded as Jewish from a racial perspective. Other,

¹¹⁸ M. Bolle, Ik zal je beschrijven hoe een dag er hier uitziet: Dagboekbrieven uit Amsterdam, Westerbork en Bergen-Belsen (Amsterdam, 2003), 124.

¹¹⁹ De Jong, Het Koninkrijk, vii. 296–302; see also N. K. C. A. In 't Veld, De Joodse Ereraad (The Hague, 1989).

¹²⁰ G. von Frijtag Drabbe Künzel, *Het geval Calmeyer* (Amsterdam, 2008), 143–5. Calmeyer himself has always claimed that 18,000 people were saved, and this figure has come up many times in discussions of his actions. Von Frijtag's calculations are based on exhaustive research on individual files from Calmeyer's *Entscheidungsstelle* unit, supplemented with reports by the Dutch national population registry inspection service and the German *Sicherheitspolizei* dating from 1943–4; P. van den Boomgaard, *Voor de nazi's geen Jood: Hoe ruim 2500 Joden door ontduiking van de rassenvoorschriften aan de deportaties zijn ontkomen* (Amsterdam, 2019), 598.

German authorities also examined this issue, but such efforts had little impact in the end.¹²¹ Historians still disagree about Calmeyer's motives and whether he made a purposeful attempt to protect as many people as possible from deportation. It will probably always remain impossible to determine what motivated him and what, exactly, he accomplished, for lack of conclusive source materials.¹²²

Objections based on holding a passport from a Central or South American state—sometimes purchased outright—saved very few people from deportation. ¹²³ For a while, hundreds of people pinned their hopes on the con artistry of Friedrich Weinreb, who managed to mislead the persecutors for some time at the start of the deportations. He claimed to be under the protection of non-existent German authorities and gave the impression that he was authorized to issue temporary exemptions from deportation. The German police put a stop to this in January 1943, and Weinreb's exemptions became worthless. The Sicherheitsdienst (Security Service, SD) later tried to use Weinreb as an informant, and to track down Jews in hiding. In 1948 he was sentenced to six years in prison for fraud, treason, and collaboration as an informer. Controversies about what he had done and about his conviction flared up repeatedly in the years that followed. ¹²⁴

When these procedural escape routes no longer offered a way out, there were two remaining ways, both illegal, of evading deportation: fleeing to a safe foreign country or going into hiding in the Netherlands. Both choices entailed leaving one's old life behind completely, and both were fraught with uncertainty and mortal danger. They demanded a courage born of insight or desperation and the willingness to make survival the sole objective. Fleeing by sea to England or by land to Spain or Switzerland

¹²¹ Presser, Ondergang, ii. 72–83; for a detailed account of Calmeyer's role and of the 'Aktie Portugesia', its nature, and its aftermath, in the light of three centuries of Sephardi family history, see J. F. Cohen, De onontkoombare afkomst van Eli d'Oliveira: Een Portugees-Joodse familiegeschiedenis (Amsterdam, 2015), esp. 364–454; and H. U. Jesserun d'Oliveira, Ontjoodst door de wetenschap: De wetenschappelijke en menselijke integriteit van Arie de Froe tijdens de bezetting (Amsterdam, 2015).

122 De Jong, Het Koninkrijk, vi. 305–15. De Jong, at pp. 309–10, estimates that almost 3,000 people were saved by way of Calmeyer; see also Herzberg, Kroniek, 179–84; other pro-Calmeyer accounts include P. Niebaum, Ein Gerechter unter den Völkern: Hans Calmeyer in seiner Zeit (1903–1972) (Osnabrück, 2001); M. Middelberg, 'Wer bin ich, dass ich über Leben und Tod entscheide?': Hans Calmeyer — 'Rassereferent' in den Niederlanden 1941–1945 (Göttingen, 2015); one study critical of Calmeyer is Stuldreher, De legale rest; one account critical of Von Frijtag is R. van Galen-Herrmann, Calmeyer: Dader of mensenredder? Visies op Calmeyers rol in de jodenvervolging (Soesterberg, 2009).

124 See R. Grüter, 'Een fantast schrijft geschiedenis: De affaires rond Friedrich Weinreb' (Amsterdam, 1997). See also I. Schöffer, 'Weinreb, een affaire van lange duur', *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis*, 95 (1982), 196–224; reprinted in I. Schöffer, *Veelvormig verleden: Zeventien studies in de vaderlandse geschiedenis* (Amsterdam, 1987), 193–216; a report on Weinreb was published under the auspices of the Rijksinstituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie (National Institute for War Documentation, now part of the NIOD Institute): D. Gilthay Veth and A. J. van der Leeuw, *Rapport door het Rijksinstituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie uitgebracht aan de minister van Justitie inzake de activiteitenvan drs. F. Weinreb gedurende de jaren 1940–1945, in het licht van nadere gegevens bezien, 2 vols.* (The Hague, 1976).

required uncommon daring, fortitude, resilience, and talent for improvisation. ¹²⁵ Some 1,700 to 2,700 Jews are known to have done so successfully. ¹²⁶ Refugees could improve their chances by using qualities and skills that mattered in a free society, such as perseverance and ingenuity. Life in hiding was often more passive and less eventful—mere 'existence', in the hope of better times. ¹²⁷

The decision to go into hiding required a powerful impetus, normally the prospect of deportation. Individuals usually had to find their own way into hiding. The leaders of the Jewish Council and most local representatives on the whole disapproved of going into hiding, fearing reprisals. One striking exception was the position of the Enschede branch; after the 1941 round-ups, it worked with the group surrounding the pastor Leendert Overduin to help Jews go into hiding, thus saving a considerable number of people. ¹²⁸ It took a network of this kind to arrange for hiding places and take people there. In Amsterdam's Transvaalbuurt, a group of young socialist Jews protested against registration with the Zentralstelle, but having no hiding places to offer, they had to look on as most people went ahead with registering. Their next move was to focus on forging identity papers and ration cards. ¹²⁹ Their early work included initiatives to save Jewish children in Amsterdam and Utrecht. Student groups saved around 1,100 children, including 385 from the crèche across the street from the Hollandsche Schouwburg. ¹³⁰ At least 4,500 Jewish children in total were sent into hiding with host families and cared for until the occupation ended. ¹³¹

In 1942 most people still had to find their own way into hiding, relying on their own resources and social circles. The most vital step was for them to find potential hiding places and determine whether the hosts were trustworthy. Then they had to make arrangements regarding daily interactions, accommodation fees, and the supply of food. On 9 July 1942 Otto and Edith Frank and their daughters Margot and Anne moved

- ¹²⁵ For the courage and strength of will required and the sacrifices made, see H. Schippers, *De Westerweelgroep en de Palestinapioniers: Non-conformistisch verzet in de Tweede Wereldoorlog* (Hilversum, 2015).
- ¹²⁶ A total of 1,700 Dutch refugees reached England, and at least 783 others tried but failed, according to Agnes Dessing, *Tulpen voor Wilhelmina: De geschiedenis van de Engelandvaarders* (Amsterdam, 2004), 208–9; Michman, Beem, Michman, *Pinkas*, 204, claim that the number of Dutch Jews who escaped the country and survived the war was 2,700. S. Plantinga, 'Principieel pragmatisch: De Nederlandse vertegenwoordiging in Paris, 1940–1944', in B. de Graaff and D. Hellema (eds.) *Instrumenten van buitenlandse politiek: Achtergronden en praktijk van de Nederlandse diplomatie* (Amsterdam, 2007).
 - ¹²⁷ Z. Valkhoff, Leven in een niet-bestaan: Beleving en betekenis van de joodse onderduik (Utrecht, 1992), 105.
- ¹²⁸ For the Overduin group, see Schenkel, *De Twentse Paradox*, 85–9; this author calculates that 634 Jews survived in Enschede, more than half of the 1,203 pre-war Jewish residents; ibid. 94.
- ¹²⁹ A. Caransa, Verzamelen op het Transvaalplein: Ter nagedachtenis van het Joodse proletariaat van Amsterdam (Baarn, 1984), 39–40.
- ¹³⁰ B. J. Flim, Saving the Children: History of the Organized Effort to Rescue Jewish Children in The Netherlands, 1942–1945 (Bethesda, Md., 2005).
- ¹³¹ Herzberg, *Kroniek*, 317–18; J. Withuis, 'Zonder naam, zonder ouders, vogelvrij: Ondergedoken kinderen en de complexe constellatie van verlating, woede en dankbaarheid', in Valkhoff, *Leven in een niet-bestaan*, 10, gives a figure of 5,000 to 6,000 children; De Jong, *Het Koninkrijk*, xii. 57 puts the number at 4,500.

to their hiding place on the Prinsengracht in Amsterdam. As stateless Jews from Germany, they were part of the first group summoned to report for deportation. Unlike most persecuted Jews, they had a plan and had arranged for a hiding place. Otto had made careful preparations for his family and a few acquaintances to hide at his business address. Non-Jewish employees took on the job of caring for the eight residents of the 'Secret Annex'. Despite all his precautions, the German police found out about the hiding place—probably because someone betrayed the residents to them —and raided the Secret Annex on 4 August 1944 to arrest the residents and their helpers. They were sent to Westerbork and, on 3 September 1944, deported from there to Auschwitz. 132

It was not until 1943 that most people in the Netherlands abandoned their wait-and-see attitude. Disgust with the Nazis grew into resistance when even non-Jews were threatened with round-ups and deportation. A resistance movement formed that acquired the tools and techniques to help people, on a larger scale, to go into hiding and remain there safely. This assistance came too late for the tens of thousands of Jews who had already been deported. Because life in hiding was based on secret, informal arrangements, the exact number of Jews in hiding is unknown. It is plausible that from mid-1942 to the end of the occupation, nearly 28,000 Jews lived in hiding; around 16,100 survived the war. 134

Going into hiding meant leaving behind every scrap of your personal identity: your job, home, children, partner, relatives, and possessions—and even your own name. You placed your life in the hands of other people, often strangers, granting them farreaching control over your actions within the narrow limits of your new life. 'It takes very strong nerves to do this, of course, because there's no news from your family members, you're trapped, and of course that drives you mad.' Clearly, there was more to life in hiding than merely inactivity and boredom. There was also the constant, nerve-wracking fear of discovery, whether in the crowded towns and cities, where the walls had ears, or in the countryside, where people knew each other. The minds of people in hiding turned to frightening but real possibilities: the Nazis might search the house, or someone might inform on them. In that case, they could expect rapid deportation to Mauthausen or some other death camp. They often had to rush without warning from one hiding place to the next; not many people were able to stay put. Every change of location was risky and added to their fears. And in each new hiding

¹³² The English translation of the Dutch scholarly edition of the diaries of Anne Frank (Netherlands State Institute for War Documentation, 1985) is *The Diary of Anne Frank: The Critical Edition* (London, 1989). Two recently launched research projects are aimed at producing new critical editions: Anne Frank Project, Lichtenberg Kolleg, Georg-August-Universität Göttingen, https://www.uni-goettingen.de/en/anne+frank/418200.html, and Huygens-ING Institute, Amsterdam, ">https://en.huygens.knaw.nl/projecten/onderzoek-manuscripten-anne-frank/?noredirect=en_GB>">https://en.huygens.knaw.nl/projecten/onderzoek-manuscripten-anne-frank/?noredirect=en_GB>">https://en.huygens.knaw.nl/projecten/onderzoek-manuscripten-anne-frank/?noredirect=en_GB>">https://en.huygens.knaw.nl/projecten/onderzoek-manuscripten-anne-frank/?noredirect=en_GB>">https://en.huygens.knaw.nl/projecten/onderzoek-manuscripten-anne-frank/?noredirect=en_GB>">https://en.huygens.knaw.nl/projecten/onderzoek-manuscripten-anne-frank/?noredirect=en_GB>">https://en.huygens.knaw.nl/projecten/onderzoek-manuscripten-anne-frank/?noredirect=en_GB>">https://en.huygens.knaw.nl/projecten/onderzoek-manuscripten-anne-frank/?noredirect=en_GB>">https://en.huygens.knaw.nl/projecten/onderzoek-manuscripten-anne-frank/?noredirect=en_GB>">https://en.huygens.knaw.nl/projecten/onderzoek-manuscripten-anne-frank/?noredirect=en_GB>">https://en.huygens.knaw.nl/projecten/onderzoek-manuscripten-anne-frank/?noredirect=en_GB>">https://en.huygens.knaw.nl/projecten/onderzoek-manuscripten-anne-frank/?noredirect=en_GB>">https://en.huygens.knaw.nl/projecten/onderzoek-manuscripten-anne-frank/?noredirect=en_GB>">https://en.huygens.knaw.nl/projecten/onderzoek-manuscripten-anne-frank/?noredirect=en_GB>">https://en.huygens.knaw.nl/projecten/onderzoek-manuscripten/onderzoek-manuscripten/onderzoek-manuscripten/onderzoek-manuscripten/o

¹³³ Blom, 'Vervolging van joden', 144.

¹³⁵ Bolle, Ik zal je beschrijven hoe een dag er hier uitziet, 103.

place, they had to build up a new relationship with their hosts and find a new way of going on with life.

Depending on the circumstances, their hosts might ask them to help out around the house, on the farm, or in the business. In the best cases, a warm relationship developed and there were opportunities for socializing, study, and conversation. Bad hosts exploited and humiliated the people in hiding, regarding them solely as a source of income.

Sometimes people were even thrown out or, worse, betrayed to the authorities if they could no longer pay. Religious Jews faced the additional, formidable challenge of abiding by Jewish law and their own customs in non-Jewish hiding places. Yet people in hiding did manage to celebrate the Jewish holidays, honouring their traditions in spite of everything. In Rotterdam and Amsterdam, there were even clandestine living-room synagogues. ¹³⁶ In the home of Salomon Mendes Coutinho on Nieuwe Keizersgracht in Amsterdam, services were held in accordance with the Portuguese Jewish rite. ¹³⁷ Mendes Coutinho worked with others to organize partly illegal Jewish funerals in Diemen and Ouderkerk. ¹³⁸ Jews in hiding in Meppel tried to organize a Yom Kippur service in 1943. One of them broke into the vacant Deventer synagogue to find a prayer-book and then posted it to Meppel. ¹³⁹

A great deal of resistance by Jews was rooted in pre-war experience with oppression and persecution and with networks for providing assistance, such as refugee aid organizations, political parties, and the Zionist movement. German refugees, in particular, had lived through oppression and persecution before and were mentally prepared for what might happen during the Dutch occupation. One such refugee was the dauntless Gerhard Badrian, a member of Gerrit van der Veen's forgery group, which began supplying Jews with false passports as early as the summer of 1942. Both Badrian and Van der Veen were killed by German bullets in June 1943. Han Amsterdam, most Jews were forced together in particular parts of the city before deportation, and that was where most activists and refugees could be found. At the registration centre in the Hollandsche Schouwburg, a resistance group tried to save people from deportation. Walter Süskind was responsible for maintaining order there on behalf of the Jewish Council. He and his associates set up a system for smuggling Jewish children out of the Schouwburg and covering it up in the records so as not to raise suspicions. From the crèche in Plantage Middenlaan, young resistance members brought the children to

¹³⁶ De Jong, Het Koninkrijk, vii. 466.

¹³⁷ Website of Stadarchief Amsterdam (Amsterdam City Archives), consulted on 22 Dec. 2015: https://www.amsterdam.nl/stadsarchief/stukken/feest/loofhuttenfeest-1944/.

¹³⁸ B. T. Wallet, L. van Huit-Schimel, and P. van Trigt, Zeeburg: Geschiedenis van een joodse begraafplaats 1714–2014 (Hilversum, 2014), 99.

¹³⁹ The celebration led one unsuspecting neighbour to remark to the hostess: 'What's all this noise? It sounds like a synagogue service.' Derksen, *Opkomst en ondergang*, 330.

¹⁴⁰ De Jong, Het Koninkrijk, vii. 718–28, and Braber, This Cannot Happen Here, 146–7.

hiding places in other parts of the country. Resistance by Jews was often integrated into the diverse activities of the Dutch resistance movement. For example, Jews in hiding, often furnished with false identities, might become involved in the illegal press or the armed resistance.¹⁴¹ These activities grew out of their social and political connections beyond specifically Jewish circles.

The occupiers had a tendency to blame Jews for any unwelcome developments, including acts of resistance. This was a strategy for persuading people that the so-called Jewish evil was everywhere and was a justification for anti-Jewish reprisals. Members of the Jewish resistance generally had more difficulties to overcome than their non-Jewish associates. When they were arrested, they usually received harsher treatment, and whether or not they were convicted of crimes, they ran the risk of being sent to Amersfoort concentration camp as 'penal cases', or to Westerbork or Vught transit camp, and being among the first to be sent on from there to the extermination camps outside the Netherlands. The same was true of the more than 12,000 people in hiding who were tracked down and arrested, although it is not known how many of them were deported as 'penal cases'. ¹⁴²

The Transit Camps

Those who received a 'summons' in 1942 or 1943 to report 'for personal and medical examination prior to potential participation in a police-supervised work creation programme in Germany' were sent to a transit camp pending deportation to Poland. The main Dutch transit camp was Westerbork, which ceased to be a refugee camp under Dutch management on 1 July 1942 and, under the name of Judendurch-gangslager (Jewish Transit Camp) Westerbork, came under the direct authority of the Befehlshaber der Sicherheitspolizei und des Sicherheitsdienstes in the Netherlands. Two weeks later, on 15 and 16 July, the first two trains left for Auschwitz, carrying 1,137 and 586 temporary camp residents respectively (PLATE 62). In total, 101,525 people—41,156 men, 45,867 women, and 14,502 children—spent some length of time in Westerbork. The final deportation train departed for Bergen-Belsen concentration

¹⁴¹ B. Braber, *Zelfs als wij zullen verliezen: Joods verzet en illegaliteit 1940–1945* (Amsterdam, 1990), 82–90 and 142; id., *This Cannot Happen Here*, 121–3 for Süskind; for the scale of the Jewish resistance, which they claim was greater than previously supposed, see Croes and Tammes, 'Gif laten wij niet voortbestaan', 195.

¹⁴² De Jong, *Het Koninkrijk*, v. III, 755. *Strafgevallen* ('cases to be penalised') were Jews who had been caught trying to evade anti-Jewish measures. At Westerbork they were stamped *strafgeval*, and usually transported to Poland at the first opportunity. De Jong reports that, at least in 1942, a *strafgeval* sent to Auschwitz fell outside the standard selection process and was murdered immediately. But J. Schelvis states in *Vernietigings-kamp Sobibor* (Amsterdam, 1993), 223, that, on the contrary, the status of *strafgeval* generally 'ceased to exist as soon as the doors of the train were closed in Westerbork and it left the grounds of the camp'; see also Croes and Tammes, 'Gif laten wij niet voortbestaan', 194–5.

¹⁴⁴ E. M. Moraal, *Als ik morgen niet op transport ga . . . Kamp Westerbork in beleving en herinnering* (Amsterdam, 2014), 350–1, 'Tijdlijn vluchtelingen en doorgangskamp Westerbork'.

camp in Germany on 15 September 1944; after that, fewer than a thousand people remained in the camp, awaiting liberation. 145

In January 1943 the Germans set up a transit camp as part of the existing concentration camp in Vught. 146 The first Jewish prisoners were mostly from Amsterdam and had worked in the diamond and textile industries. A few months later, increasing numbers of Jews began to be sent to Vught from outside the major cities. Even people from the Westerbork area had to report to Vught around that time, apparently because Westerbork's capacity had been exceeded as a result of the accelerated expulsion of Jews from places other than Amsterdam. The Jews in Vught hoped to be allowed to remain in the Netherlands as long as they worked. The Germans encouraged this false hope at first but later made it clear that Vught was in fact a transit camp en route to eastern Europe. 147 After a while, conditions there deteriorated. 'The camp turned out to be a true KZ [Konzentrationslager, concentration camp], and it was terrible there . . . The rumours we heard were terrifying.'148 Families of prisoners were split up, and from April 1943 onwards, groups had to perform heavy labour outside the camp. Aside from two transports that went directly to Poland, the internees in Vught were sent on to Westerbork in 1943 and 1944. In 1943 around 12,000 Jews were deported to Vught, but by September of that same year 10,500 of them had already been sent on to Westerbork. In early June 1943 all children under the age of 16 suddenly had to leave the camp. The internees responded to this announcement 'with a hue and cry such as I won't soon hear again', according to David Koker's diary. 149 With or without their parents, the children were sent to Westerbork and from there almost immediately onwards to Sobibor, where on arrival they were cruelly murdered. 150

Jews taken into custody by the German police for acts of resistance or violations of the many anti-Jewish laws were held prisoner in the Polizeiliches Durchgangslager Amersfoort (Police Transit Camp Amersfoort). Although that brutal concentration camp did not have a separate division for Jews, they were treated even more harshly than the other prisoners there. ¹⁵¹ The former Amsterdam alderman Salomon Rod-

¹⁴⁵ H. O. Ottenstein, 'Lager: Westerbork. Een persoonlijk verslag', NIOD Instituut voor Oorlogs-, Holocaust-, en Genocide Studies Amsterdam, unpublished manuscript (1946), 97–8.

¹⁴⁶ M. Meeuwenoord, *Het hele leven is hier een wereld op zichzelf: De geschiedenis van Kamp Vught* (Amsterdam, 2014), 108; for a brief history of the concentration and transit camps in the Netherlands, see C. J. F. Stuldreher, 'Deutsche Konzentrationslager in den Niederlanden', in W. Benz and B. Distel (eds.), *Dachauer Hefte: Studien und Dokumente zur Geschichte der nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager*, vol. v: *Die vergessenen Lager* (1989) at 141–73; for Vught, 152–61.

¹⁴⁷ Meeuwenoord, Het hele leven is hier een wereld op zichzelf, 153–7; P. W. Klein and J. van der Kamp, Het Philips commando in Kamp Vught (Amsterdam, 2003).

M. Cahen, Ik heb dit alles opgeschreven . . . Vught-Auschwitz-Vught. Memoires van Max Cahen 1939–1945 ('s-Hertogenbosch, 2010), 49.
¹⁴⁹ Koker, Dagboek geschreven in Vught, 128.

¹⁵⁰ Meeuwenoord, Geschiedenis van kamp Vught, 109–11; Stuldreher, 'Deutsche Konzentrationslager', 154.

¹⁵¹ Von Frijtag, Kamp Amersfoort, 106–8; Presser, Ondergang, i. 433–4, and Stuldreher, 'Deutsche Konzentrationslager', 148.

rigues de Miranda was brought there in late October 1942 and murdered on 3 November. Conditions were very different in one small and exceptional camp: Schaffelaar Castle near Barneveld, where around 700 Jews stayed for a while from 1942 onwards under relatively sheltered conditions. These scholars, legal professionals, public officials, and artists had been sent there on the recommendation of Dutch authorities and were regarded as dignitaries. Seyss-Inquart had promised Secretary-General Frederiks of the Interior and Secretary-General Jan van Dam of Education that this group could remain in the Netherlands. Nonetheless, Barneveld was closed in late September 1943; the residents were sent to Westerbork and from there—still treated as a 'privileged' group —to Theresienstadt. 152

The Westerbork and Vught camps were run by German commanders, who had a force of guards composed not only of SS members, but also of Dutch military and civilian policemen. The commanders received their instructions from IV B 4 in Berlin by way of the branch in The Hague and the Zentralstelle in Amsterdam. They had the final say on who would be deported. Some German commanders were cruel and malicious, others polished and businesslike, but they were all men of 'fierce reasonableness'. 153 In everything they did, their priority was to make sure the deportations proceeded smoothly. Sources of friction among the prisoners included the differential treatment of the masses, on the one hand, and the dignitaries and members of the Jewish camp administration and self-administration on the other. The senior positions for prisoners were held by a few of the earliest camp residents, especially in Westerbork. These German refugees were in charge of almost all everyday aspects of camp life; they assigned the jobs that provided temporary exemption from further deportation and had some influence over the names on the transport lists. The Jewish Council had become a thing of the past by September 1943, when the last transport of Jews from Amsterdam brought its former presidents, Cohen and Asscher, to Westerbork.

The prisoners underwent many physical and psychological hardships: 154

Life in the camp was difficult; life in the large barracks, where most people were housed for some period of time, was almost unbearable. There was constant noise—people coming and going, children crying, adults quarrelling. It was cold and dirty there, or else too hot, dusty, damp, and draughty, and there were pests. You had to eat and live on your bed, where you slept

¹⁵² B. de Munnick, *Uitverkoren in uitzondering? Het verhaal van de Joodse 'Barneveldgroep' 1942–1945* (Barneveld, 1992). Mussert, the leader of the NSB, managed by similar means to shelter a small number (by his own account, twenty) of Jewish protégés from deportation for a time in a small camp in Doetinchem (Presser, *Ondergang*, i. 437–9). For Frederiks, see Romijn, *Burgemeesters in oorlogstijd*, 405.

¹⁵³ Koker, Dagboek geschreven in Vught, 24.

¹⁵⁴ For a detailed, empathetic account of life in Westerbork as experienced and recollected by the Jews brought together there by force, see Moraal, *Als ik morgen niet op transport ga.* W. Lindwer, *Kamp van hoop en wanhoop: Getuigen van Westerbork, 1939–1945* (Amsterdam, 1990), at 184: interview with Rabbi Aron Schuster.

at night. That was your pantry and your storeroom. And the most difficult thing of all to bear: you were never, ever alone! 155

But other aspects of Westerbork life were appreciated. Some people stepped forward and made an effort to teach and inspire the community of prisoners (PLATE 67). Such activities built on the Jewish religious and community life that the German refugees had established in Westerbork before July 1942. There were Orthodox and Zionist youth groups with educational, recreational, and sports activities. The Jewish holidays, especially the High Holidays, were celebrated as far as possible. Rabbis led weekly services. There were weddings and divorces, circumcisions, and barmitzvahs. Until March 1943 those who died in the camp could be buried in the Jewish cemetery in Assen. 156

The atmosphere in the transit camps was charged not with a sense of immediate, mortal danger, but of latent menace, life-threatening yet sometimes almost ineffable. 157 Fragmentary reports circulated of mass murder and death by gas, but they were slow to be generally accepted.¹⁵⁸ The Nazis had absolutely nothing to gain from the spread of such information, which could destroy the camouflage that hid their ultimate intentions. 159 Prisoners who recognized their slim chances of survival had to ask themselves whether there was any point in passing on what they knew. After all, what hope of rescue could they offer their fellow captives? Besides, they often couldn't believe it themselves, despite their endless speculation about what 'Poland' signified. In his journal from Westerbork, Philip Mechanicus describes a conversation in which the last shred of optimism collided with the fact that hardly any letters ever arrived from people deported to Poland: 'No, optimism can change nothing about the true situation. It is a miserable mess. Whoever goes to Poland is done for.' While optimists kept their spirits up, pessimists stared 'each other in the eyes like wounded beasts'. 160 Each individual's psychological make-up and attitude towards life determined how clearly they could sense or grasp what lay ahead. 161 In April 1943, David Koker described the mood in Vught: 'What began earlier . . . will no longer let me go, it's become so intense: fear of Poland, fear of death.'162

In the transit camps, the Jews were prepared for their role as victims in the concentration and extermination camps from the moment they arrived and walked into the garish light of the camp office, 'long tables of typewriters rattling and staff members writing up records'. The Germans set up Jewish self-administrations in the camps, analogous to the Jewish Council, to make sure that the final stage of the deportation

¹⁵⁵ Quotation from Ottenstein, 'Lager Westerbork', 76. ¹⁵⁶ Lindwer, *Kamp van hoop en wanhoop*, 181–3. ¹⁵⁷ P. Mechanicus, *In depot: Dagboek uit Westerbork* (Amsterdam, 1964); for Mechanicus, see K. Broersma, 'Buigen onder de storm': Levensschets van Philip Mechanicus, 1889–1994 (Amsterdam, 1993).

Lindwer, Kamp van hoop en wanhoop, 109; De Jong, Het Koninkrijk, viii. 722–3 (Vught) and 750 (Westerbork).

159 Moraal, Als ik morgen niet op transport ga..., 170–1.

160 Mechanicus, In depot, 88.

¹⁶¹ E. Hillesum, Het denkend hart van de barak: Brieven van Etty Hillesum (Haarlem, 1982), 94–100.

¹⁶² Koker, Dagboek geschreven in Vught, 98–101. ¹⁶³ Van den Bergh, Deportaties, 15 and 21.

process would go as smoothly as the rest of it. Very few prisoners managed to escape: about 200 from Westerbork. A much larger number of people sank into resignation and 'inner emigration'. They made themselves useful by participating in educational and cultural activities, nursing the sick, and so on, or else they withdrew into their circle of friends and family members. Those who were capable of it turned to culture, cabaret, or sport for recreation. The transit camps marked a transition from life as a segregated Jewish community, with a separate system of rules and laws, to their stay in the death camps. They were one step further in the process of integrating the abnormal into the normal. Most camp residents could not help responding as if what went on around them were familiar and normal, rather than abnormal.

The two-sided nature of camp life was clearest on the Tuesdays when the trains left for Poland or Germany. In the days leading up to the event, the camp was in a state of growing agitation, culminating in the announcement of the transport lists. On the terrible Monday nights when that happened, the people whose names were read were condemned to a hellish fate, while the others were freed to cling to the familiar world for a little longer. The sentence was carried out the next day, when they departed. The simple fact of being driven into the cattle cars brought them closer to Auschwitz or Sobibor. Those who remained in Westerbork had to come to terms with their consciences. Life resumed its usual course for a little while; they could focus on their minor everyday concerns and were perhaps even briefly able to cherish the hope of a better future.

Deportation and Death

Every time a transport departed for eastern Europe, it was like 'an explosion' ¹⁶⁴ that tore the community of prisoners apart. The announcement of the transport lists caused great sorrow and panic. Some people tried desperately to obtain last-minute exemptions, while others had to make the fateful decision whether or not to volunteer to accompany their children, partner, parents, or relatives and suffer the same fate. When the moment arrived to go to the train and the Fliegende Kolonne (a group of prisoners responsible for transports) came to pick up the baggage and hurry them along, some panicked to the point of breakdown. When the train was being loaded, there was no longer any pretence of order or humanity; all that mattered was carrying out the plans for destruction. In this manner, more than 100,000 Jews from the Netherlands were carried off, in old passenger carriages at first and later in goods wagons, through Assen and Groningen and across the border near Nieuweschans.

Once the trains rode on to their final destination, the topic of so much speculation and so little certainty, the passengers realized that their departure from the Netherlands had made their isolation and segregation irreversible. Some threw farewell letters out

¹⁶⁴ Lindwer, Kamp van hoop en wanhoop, 80.

of the train in the hope that kind people would send them to the intended recipients. These messages were a last expression of their hope, sorrow, and desperation. In the packed trains, the deportees had to negotiate about such basic questions as who could be where and in what position: lying down, leaning, sitting, or standing. Only then could they do their best to converse, sleep, or relieve themselves into a barrel. They were given some bread and water for the journey, but not nearly enough. The hot or cold weather and the foul air in the train were uncomfortable even for the strong, and agonizing for the weak and sick. The way people treated each other could make the journey more or less difficult. Some were bossy or selfish and greedy, while others tried to rise above the dismal circumstances. Some people even sang on the trains, gave speeches and sermons, and occasionally felt stronger than the persecutors' plans for them, but others must have used the time to take stock of their lives. 165

It was about a day's journey to Bergen-Belsen in northern Germany, two days to Auschwitz in Silesia or Theresienstadt in Bohemia, and three to Sobibor in eastern Poland. By the time the deportees reached their final destination, they were exhausted and longed for fresh air. 166 Those who arrived in Auschwitz-Birkenau at night could not immediately make sense of the scene there: a brightly lit platform, SS men and their dogs, a building lit up in the distance, a strangely coloured sky, and, later, the terrible smell of smoke. Then they no longer had a chance to look around, because suddenly there was no time to lose. The deportees were clubbed and dragged out of the wagons by SS men and their helpers, beaten and abused, and bitten by dogs. They were lined up on the platforms, and SS doctors separated the men from the women and the healthy from the weak. Sometimes this selection process seemed to offer some slight reason for hope. Guards spoke reassuring words to the new arrivals, telling them they could support themselves by working. They promised food and drink and first, for vital reasons of hygiene, a bath.

To arrive in the concentration and extermination camps was to enter yet another new order; how far they had come from living in freedom. Even Westerbork, with its veneer of self-administration, was no longer relevant. Their persecutors now revealed their true nature as mass murderers, interested only in deciding who would be murdered at once and who would be worked to death. This selection process completed the diabolical rupture with all the patterns of fundamental normality and humanity that had shaped the lives of the Jews. This rupture was confirmed by both the immediate murders and the delayed murders. ¹⁶⁷

The camps named above were the main destinations of the deportation trains from the Netherlands; this range of destinations reflected the murderers' disparate plans for

¹⁶⁵ According to Dr E. A. Cohen, quoted by De Jong, Het Koninkrijk, viii. 788.

¹⁶⁶ Schelvis, Vernietigingskamp Sobibor, 70.

¹⁶⁷ E. Kogon et al. (eds.), Nationalsozialistische Massentötungen durch Giftgas: Eine Dokumentation (Frankfurt am Main, 1983).

different parts of the community they intended to obliterate. From 2 March to 20 July 1943 Sobibor was the final destination of nineteen trains, which carried more than 34,000 people. There was only one outcome there: quick mass murder in gas chambers. Of all the arrivals at this camp, twenty survived. 168 Auschwitz-Birkenau was a concentration and extermination camp. From 15 July 1942 to 23 February 1943 and from 24 August 1943 to 3 September 1944 a total of sixty-seven trains carried around 60,000 people there. They became the victims of 'destruction through labour' or death by gas. 169 The Auschwitz complex included numerous labour camps, where some Dutch Jews ended up. In August 1942 some 3,500 men were removed from the train in Kosel, about 80 kilometres before the final station, and taken to labour camps. 170 Conditions in camps such as Blechhammer and Monowitz varied. They were usually poor, and the work—in factories, on railways, and the like—was utterly exhausting. The enslaved workers were mistreated and given meagre portions of poor-quality food. It was scarcely possible to survive for any substantial length of time—especially for the Dutch, who were less accustomed to hardship than Jews from eastern Europe. Furthermore, their violent and sudden separation from their families had greatly harmed their morale. 171 There were 181 people in the Kosel group who survived to the end of the war, and including them, about 500 deportees returned from Auschwitz. 172

Despite the wretched circumstances in Bergen-Belsen and Theresienstadt, those camps were mainly intended for holding prisoners. The captives in Bergen-Belsen were partly seen as bargaining chips to be exchanged for German prisoners of war and internees. From 11 January to 13 September 1944 eight transports from Westerbork carried 3,751 people to Bergen-Belsen. The promised exchange did take place eventually, on a small scale: in August 1944, 200 people departed for Palestine. Their mother Edith had died in Bergen-Belsen, in February or March 1945. Their mother Edith had died in Auschwitz in January of that year. In January 1945, as Germany's defeat drew near, Himmler allowed two smaller groups to leave for Switzerland as part of his efforts to save his own skin.

Theresienstadt (Terezín) was explicitly intended to be a model camp, which served two purposes. One was to hold Jews captive who were thought to be useful in some way to Germany and the Third Reich. It was also meant to be a camp that could be shown to concerned parties in the outside world. Seven trains from the Netherlands arrived in this ghetto in Bohemia from April 1943 to September 1944, carrying some 5,000 people in total. These included Jews who had fought for Germany in the First

¹⁶⁸ Schelvis, Vernietigingskamp Sobibor. ¹⁶⁹ Kogon et al. (eds.), Massentötungen durch Giftgas, 212.

¹⁷⁰ For the stories of what became of some of them later, see H. van Rens, *Vervolgd in Limburg: Joden en Sinti in Nederlands-Limburg tijdens de Tweede Wereldoorlog* (Hilversum, 2013), 141–7.

¹⁷¹ C. Rood, *Onze dagen: Herinneringen aan de Jodenvervolging* (Amsterdam, 2011). For the Dutch prisoners in Blechhammer, see De Jong, *Het Koninkrijk*, viii. 800.

¹⁷² Presser, Ondergang, ii. 411-12 and 425.

¹⁷³ Herzberg, Kroniek, 290 and 307.

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World War, as well as groups of baptized Jews and Portuguese Jews, the Barneveld group, and the Jewish Council presidents. More than 3,000 of them, including 'the Portuguese', were sent on to Auschwitz in September and October 1944.

The Jews who managed to stay alive in the above-mentioned concentration and extermination camps were driven out onto the roads in the final stage of the war, when the Red Army, on its advance towards Berlin, evacuated the camps and sent the internees to camps in Germany. Thousands more died on the notorious death marches of the winter of 1944-5. 175

Conclusion

Even though the Jews in the Netherlands were highly assimilated, it proved possible to cut them out of Dutch society very rapidly. The Nazis saw the persecution and deportation of the Jews as the only satisfactory solution to the problem they themselves had willed into being through their antisemitism. They used propaganda, deception, intimidation, and violence to force Jews and non-Jews to do as they wished. In the Netherlands and elsewhere, the German occupiers brought about the complete segregation of non-Jews from Jews, the primary targets of their murderous plans.

Many Jews tried to resist the breakdown of Jewish life in the Netherlands. They showed great community spirit and tried to inspire and support their fellow Jews. It remains a tragic fact that the persecutors benefited just as much from the solidarity and self-sacrificing inclinations in Jewish circles as they did from the most sordid selfishness. This finding does not call the significance of exemplary altruism into question, but it does reveal the essence of how the Nazi system succeeded in incorporating the entire spectrum of human behaviour into the machinery of persecution. This is the essence of what the hounded Jews had to go through. Those who could not conceive of all the rational planning and implementation that went into the destruction of the Jews had no chance of responding effectively.

The Jews were placed under a form of self-administration that accelerated their journey to destruction: the Jewish Council. The presidents Cohen and Asscher chose to cooperate, in the hope that they could extract significant concessions and moderate the persecutors' policies. This attitude was in part a continuation of the way Jewish leaders had related to Dutch society. Like the non-Jewish elite, Jewish leaders during the occupation were 'generally cooperative, efficient in their administration, and compliant with authority', in keeping with 'the pre-war tradition of organization within their own community and consultation on that basis with the authorities'. The Dutch Jews had

¹⁷⁴ Herzberg, Kroniek, 313.

D. Blatman, Die Todesmarsche 1944/45: Das letzte Kapitel des nationalsozialistischen Massenmords (Reinbeck bei Hamburg, 2011).
 De Jong's phrasing in Het Koninkrijk, viii. 890.

¹⁷⁷ Blom, 'Vervolging van de Joden in Nederland', 148.

hardly any experience of violent antisemitism and were inadequately prepared for the radical nature of the Nazi regime. Jewish leaders endeavoured to show that they were capable, responsible officials and hoped that this would lead to less extreme persecution.¹⁷⁸ But that, too, worked to the persecutors' advantage.

The policies of the Jewish Council were subject to fierce and widespread criticism during and after the war, but even the harshest critics saw no alternative, in retrospect, except for non-cooperation.¹⁷⁹ The Jewish Council's leaders believed that shutting down the organization in protest against the plans for deportation would gain them only a moral victory, offering no chance of large-scale rescue.¹⁸⁰ The presidents did not grasp the nature of the German system or develop any strategy to avoid persecution other than cooperation in the hope of saving part of the Jewish population. In fact, their legalistic mindset more or less ruled out other possibilities. That explains why the leaders of the Jewish Council did not look for ways of turning their organization into a cover for 'illegal' rescue efforts. Walter Süskind is an example of a rescuer who was wise enough to keep his activities in the Hollandsche Schouwburg a secret from Cohen and others.

In September 1944 the Germans decided that most Dutch Jews in Theresienstadt had to be deported to Auschwitz. David Cohen was placed in the familiar position of being offered a limited number of exemptions by the camp leaders. With regret in his voice, he said farewell to one of the many who had to go: 'I can do no more for you, sir. But you know, it's only for work. You're young and healthy.'¹⁸¹ To the very end, Cohen distinguished between 'people who could be useful' and everyone else. ¹⁸² The persecution of the Jews was achieved through a cumulative series of measures that led to their destruction. By considering each step in that series in isolation, Cohen could go on telling himself, each time, that he was trying to salvage as much he could. He knew that the victims were unable and unwilling to understand, that his choices horrified them, but he regarded that as the inevitable consequence of the position he held.

It should be added that the attitude of the Jewish Council was not fundamentally different from that of the Dutch public administration, which resigned itself, after verbal protest, to the Jews being deprived of their citizenship and of the protection of the law. Senior public administrators provided the Jewish Council with absolutely no

¹⁷⁸ I. Trunk, Jewish Responses to Nazi Persecution: Collective and Individual Behaviour in Extremis (New York, 1979), 10–14; compare Caransa, Verzamelen op het Transvaalplein, 24–5.

¹⁷⁹ On the purge of the post-war Jewish community, whose targets included the presidents of the Jewish Council, see In 't Veld, *De Joodse Ereraad*. For the post-war criminal charges against the presidents, see J. T. M. Houwink ten Cate, 'De Justitie en de Joodsche Raad', in E. Jonker and M. van Rossem (eds.), *Geschiedenis en Cultuur: Achttien opstellen* (The Hague, 1990), 149–71; I. de Haan, 'An Unresolved Controversy: The Jewish Honor Court in the Netherlands, 1946–1950', in L. Jockusch and G. N. Finder (eds.), *Jewish Honor Courts: Revenge, Retribution, and Reconciliation in Europe and Israel after the Holocaust* (Detroit, Mich., 2015), 107–36.

¹⁸⁰ De Wolff, Geschiedenis der Joden in Nederland, 42, and Wielek, De oorlog die Hitler won, 108.

¹⁸¹ Van den Bergh, *Deportaties*, 49–51.

¹⁸² Somers (ed.), Voorzitter van de Joodse Raad, 209.

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backing, and Dutch officialdom failed to develop a strategy to protect or rescue the Jews aside from requesting special treatment for some of them. Even the Dutch Red Cross, part of an international, non-governmental organization, took a formalistic, detached, and compliant stance with regard to the Jews. One result was that prisoners and deportees did not receive any form of assistance. The Red Cross regarded the persecution of the Jews as political in nature and was unwilling to endanger its neutrality by taking sides. ¹⁸³ After the war, the Red Cross was severely criticized for its passivity with regard to both the Jewish and the non-Jewish victims of Nazi persecution. Individual helpers (including numerous officials and Red Cross workers) and resistance organizations did come into action to bring their Jewish compatriots to relative safety in hiding places. Yet society as a whole was not quick enough to recognize that the Jewish population required robust protection. This harsh fact is central to how we look back on this catastrophic episode in Dutch history.

As early as 1950 Abel Herzberg wrote in his Kroniek der Jodenvervolging ('Chronicle of the Persecution of the Jews') that, in numerical terms, this period was 'much, much worse' for Dutch Jews than for Jews in other western European countries and almost as bad as in most eastern European countries. Many explanations have been put forward for this discrepancy. For example, it was harder to reach safe territory from the Netherlands during the occupation, and there were fewer places to hide in the densely populated country. The government bureaucracy was inadequately prepared for a politics of discrimination and persecution and was not encouraged to resist by the government-in-exile in London. 184 Many Jews and their leaders did not fully comprehend the danger they were in. Some of these factors also applied, mutatis mutandis, to France and Belgium, but in those two countries there were more opportunities to go into hiding or escape. The collaborating authorities in the Vichy government supported the capture of non-French Jews but slowed down the persecution of Jews with French nationality. In Belgium, the military occupying regime was less focused on persecution at first and sought to limit the influence of the SS. When the deportations did begin, there was a widely supported initiative to help Jews into hiding. 185

All in all, 79 per cent of Dutch Jews died in the Holocaust—in grim contrast to 40 per cent in Belgium and 38 per cent in France. Herzberg formulated what later became known as the Dutch paradox: 'The strong historical interweaving of the Dutch Jews with the Dutch people and, in many respects, with Dutch identity scarcely benefited them.' ¹⁸⁶ A generation later, Hans Blom was the first to systematically investigate why.

¹⁸³ L. van Bergen, De zwaargewonden eerst? Het Nederlandsche Roode Kruis en het vraagstuk van oorlog en vrede 1867–1945 (Rotterdam, 1994), 453; R. Grüter, Kwesties van leven en dood: Het Nederlandse Rode Kruis in de Tweede Wereldoorlog (Amsterdam, 2017).

¹⁸⁵ Based on J. W. Griffioen and R. Zeller, *Jodenvervolging in Nederland, Frankrijk en België 1940–1945: Overeen-komsten, verschillen, oorzaken* (Amsterdam, 2011), ch. 13, 'Bezetters', pp. 395–455.

¹⁸⁶ Herzberg, Kroniek, 322-4.

Blom pointed to the crucial significance of several structural factors distinctive to the Netherlands: the efficient and effective occupying regime, the traditionally cooperative and compliant attitude of the public and the government bureaucracy, and the profound assimilation into society of the Jewish population, which paradoxically left it unable to defend itself adequately from the radical persecution of the Holocaust.¹⁸⁷

This analysis has been confirmed and refined by later research. Docility and compliance with authority in Jewish circles certainly played a role. This was fuelled by a false sense of security derived from the great strides made in emancipation and integration. In the Holocaust, the national ideal of unity in diversity lost its binding force once the occupying regime began to insist on the different nature of the Jews. The exclusion of the Jews took place especially quickly in the Netherlands and was so complete that the Jews became, so to speak, invisible to their compatriots. The Dutch public administration continued to do its work efficiently under German leadership and control and let itself be used to further the process of marginalization, isolation, and persecution. Resistance to this process was slow to develop, was not at all widespread, and could save only a limited number of lives. The estimated number of people in hiding, 28,000, shows that many people were willing to risk grave danger. On the other hand, many more people were scared, indifferent, unwilling, or unable to help in any way.

But comparative study of the Netherlands, France, and Belgium has reconfirmed the main reason the persecutors could arrest and murder so many people: namely, the power, effectiveness, and cruelty of the occupying regime and its organs of persecution, which spared nothing and no one. In the Netherlands, more than anywhere else in western Europe, the SS largely gained control of the persecution of the Jews and integrated this Jew-hunt directly into its chain of command. The most fanatical persecutors acquired great freedom of action, and used it, with fateful consequences. This was the case both at the top levels of the occupying regime and at the local level, where the German police organizations that enforced anti-Jewish measures in Amsterdam and The Hague were especially radical and violent in their hunt for Jews in hiding. The second s

The large-scale destruction of Jewish life cast a long shadow over the later lives of survivors, whether they returned from eastern Europe or emerged from hiding in the Netherlands after the country was liberated. The experience of persecution, segregation, and the attack on their existence left a deep mark on their relationships with God and their fellow humans, with Judaism, with their neighbours, and with Dutch

¹⁸⁷ Blom, 'De vervolging van joden in Nederland', 149.

This was the central finding of the large-scale comparative study by Griffioen and Zeller, *Jodenvervolging in Nederland, Frankrijk en België 1940–1945*, esp. ch. 16, 'Vergelijkende verklaring en conclusies', pp. 637–86.

¹⁸⁹ According to a generally nuanced study of the relationships between the organizations responsible for the persecution: Croes and Tammes, *'Gif laten wij niet voortbestaan'*, 536–7.

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society. The swift social transformation they had lived through during the war disoriented them in time and in the world. In the camps and the deportation trains, and in hiding, the usual rhythm of day and night lost its meaning, and it was impossible to look forward to any kind of future. Gerhard Leopold Durlacher calls his arrest the moment when his 'umbilical cord to time' was severed. It was followed by periods in various camps. As early as his time in Westerbork, he saw his identity as 'a directionless glacier, adrift from the past and future. How did I arrive here, at this godforsaken point in time and space?' This question may express the core of the Jewish experience under National Socialism.

¹⁹⁰ Durlacher, Strepen aan de hemel, 25.

BETWEEN THE MARGINS AND THE CENTRE

Jews in the Post-War Netherlands

BART T. WALLET

After years of grief and reconstruction, I November 1956 was to be a day of celebration for Amsterdam's Jewish community. In the eastern district of Amsterdam-Oost, a new synagogue had been built. The plans for celebrating its dedication were virtually an exact duplicate of the programme of events from 1928 for the dedication of the district's old synagogue, which had been demolished in the Second World War. On 31 October, however—just one day before the big event—it was decided that the service should instead have a solemn, restrained tone. The reception, the special Torah scroll procession, and the festive songs were all cancelled. This change of heart had been brought on by the outbreak, that very day, of the Suez crisis—the Second Arab—Israeli War, in which Israeli troops clashed with Egyptian forces. Jews in the Netherlands felt that a religious celebration would be inappropriate while Israeli soldiers were in combat.

Besides the situation in the new State of Israel, another shadow hung over the dedication service: the memory of the Holocaust, the persecution and genocide of Jews in the Second World War. A special prayer was said to commemorate the murdered Jews from Amsterdam East, and many members of the congregation donated ceremonial or functional objects to the synagogue with inscriptions or plaques that bore the names of Holocaust victims. If you could read Hebrew and looked around the synagogue, you could see that as well as being a house of worship, it had also become a house of remembrance.

Such were the circumstances under which Amsterdam's Jewish community opened their first new post-war synagogue—in the shadow of the Holocaust, and in

In the first edition of this book the chapter about the post-war period was contributed by Chaya Brasz. For personal reasons, she was unable to revise that valuable chapter and include the most recent history. This chapter makes grateful use of her oeuvre. My gratitude also goes to the late Evelien Gans, who has been taken from us too soon. Her passionate investigation of pre-war and post-war Dutch Jewry will be sorely missed.

sympathy with the situation in Israel. The expectations for the near future were tempered. Chief Rabbi Aron Schuster, speaking at the service, vividly expressed this pessimistic view: 'One question sometimes asked is whether it still makes sense to build new synagogues in the Netherlands, given the certainty that they will not be filled and the probability that a few decades from now Judaism will no longer exist here.'¹ Schuster, a firm religious (or Mizrachi) Zionist, who had replaced the non-Zionist (Agudist) chief rabbi, Justus Tal, two years earlier, said aloud what many people were thinking. The prevailing idea was that the Jewish community in the Netherlands would disappear in the fairly short term, because those with a strong Jewish identity would move to Israel or the United States, while other Jews would assimilate almost completely. Schuster and his contemporaries believed they were living through the final chapter of the history of the Jews in the Netherlands.

The consecration of the new synagogue illustrates four characteristic elements of post-war Dutch Jewish history: the dynamics of rebuilding Jewish community life; the constant doubt that Jewish life would go on much longer in the Netherlands, or the ideological certainty that it would not; the influence of Zionism and, from 1948 onwards, of the existence of the State of Israel; and finally, the aftermath of the fateful war years: the emotional impact, the after-effects, and the acts of remembrance. These parameters defined the character of the ravaged community, whose reconstruction had begun the very day the occupation ended, carried out by Jews who had lived in hiding, later joined by those who returned from the camps or from safe foreign countries to which they had fled. Their efforts produced a new variety of Jewish community life, which showed continuity with the pre-war community in some respects, but also had many novel characteristics. This chapter aims to provide an overview of that transformation and to show how developments in Dutch society, combined with international tendencies in Jewish life, have led to a number of major changes in the lives of Dutch Jews since 1945.

In order to trace these shifts clearly, this chapter—after opening with an analysis of the stage of return and restoration of legal rights—divides the post-war era into periods reflecting general changes in Dutch society.² This approach is based on the belief that the organization of the Jewish community or communities was determined, in large part, by the legal possibilities and dominant beliefs in Dutch society as a whole. What it meant to be Jewish was defined in part by the context. Of course, this period-

¹ Quoted in 'Nieuwe Joodse synagoge ingewijd in Amsterdam', in Leeuwarder Courant, 3 Nov. 1956; see also B. Wallet, P. van Trigt, and H. Polak, Die ons heeft laten leven: Geschiedenis van de Joodse Gemeente Amsterdam [NIHS] van 1945 tot 2010 (Amsterdam, 2011), 64.

² This periodization was used for the first time in B. Wallet, 'Van de marge naar het centrum en weer terug: Joden in de naoorlogse Nederlandse samenleving', *Volzin*, 14/4 (2015), 26–9. Parts of this chapter undergird and elaborate on that earlier work. The chapter also draws on id., 'Een familie van gemeenschappen: De dynamiek van joods Nederland in de naoorlogse periode', in P. van Dam, J. Kennedy, and F. Wielenga (eds.), *Achter de zuilen: Op zoek naar religie in naoorlogs Nederland* (Amsterdam, 2014), 135–54.

ization is a construct of the historian and will be applied with subtlety and flexibility. It is also worth noting that this periodization, based on the Dutch context, does not imply that international developments in Jewish life played a secondary role; rather, it reflects the belief that the organization, perception, self-image, and social status of Dutch Jews are so closely linked to general Dutch society that this offers the most promising starting point. This approach leaves room to evaluate international influences on their own merits, and in fact, such influences often show parallels to the Dutch context.

Return and Restoration of Rights

Liberation and Repatriation

Dutch Jews experienced the end of the Holocaust at different times. Some Jews in hiding—those in the part of the Netherlands south of the major rivers—were liberated in September 1944, while others could not resurface into freedom until May 1945, when the occupation ended throughout the country. Some 16,000 Jews in total had survived the war in hiding. They laid the foundations for the reconstruction of Jewish life and the Jewish community in the Netherlands. Some 14,000 of them had survived thanks to their mixed marriages, the rescindment of *Volljude* ('full Jew') status, or legal emigration. A mere 5,500 survivors of the concentration and extermination camps were liberated by the Allies and then had to be repatriated. Lastly, around 3,000 Jews had fled and reached free countries—Switzerland or Great Britain in most cases.³ The processes of return, reception, restoration of rights, and reconstruction began simultaneously and were in constant interaction, but each one followed a unique pattern.

The situation in the liberated Netherlands was complex. The country had suffered terribly in the final years of the war: there were food shortages, areas of devastation and flooding, and a lack of housing (PLATE 69). Meanwhile, a few hundred thousand Dutch citizens were in Germany or central and eastern Europe; besides Jews, these were mainly forced labourers for German industry and prisoners of war. All these problems created a great deal of work for the relevant authorities.⁴ Once the German occupying forces had left, the country was officially governed by the Militair Gezag (Military Authority) appointed by the Dutch government-in-exile to oversee the transition to an orderly society. From 14 September 1944 to 4 March 1946 this Military Authority operated alongside the civilian Dutch authorities—at first the London government-in-exile led by the conservative Christian democrat Pieter Sjoerds Gerbrandy and later the 'emergency government' headed by the social liberal Wim Schermerhorn. Its work

³ B. A. Sijes, 'Enkele opmerkingen over de positie van de joden tijdens de Tweede Wereldoorlog in bezet Nederland', *Jaarboek van de Maatschappij der Nederlandse Letterkunde* (1974), 14–38: 14–15.

⁴ M. Bossenbroek, De Meelstreep: Terugkeer en opvang na de Tweede Wereldoorlog (Amsterdam, 2001), 77–145.

included the purge of the authorities and the public sector, economic recovery, the food supply, and—to a growing extent—the war in the Dutch East Indies. The Military Authority only briefly took over the work of public administration, rapidly withdrawing from various areas of activity as the political system recovered. In May 1946 a parliamentary election was held; this made it possible to replace the temporary parliament (Tijdelijke Staten-Generaal) that had served since the liberation of the country with a lawfully elected House of Representatives (Tweede Kamer). A new political government could then move on with reconstruction.

The chaos of the liberation period, the purge of the public services, and the transition to a civilian administration provided the framework for efforts towards the recovery and reconstruction of Jewish life. From the very start, the reception of returning Dutch Jews and the restoration of Jews' legal rights took place in the larger context of the recovery of Dutch society in general. Furthermore, the Dutch authorities, while still in London, made a fundamental decision with far-reaching consequences: in contrast to the situation in the war period, no distinction would be drawn between Jewish and non-Jewish nationals. For the Dutch authorities, normalization entailed recognizing only one category of Dutch citizens, who all had equal rights and duties. While this approach did restore the Jews to their pre-war legal status, it neglected the fact that they had been much harder hit in the war than other Dutch nationals and made it much more difficult to take special measures to assist them. There were, however, a few general programmes that in fact were used mainly by Jews. A related issue was that the main objective of reconstruction was the recovery of society as a whole, with citizens sharing the burdens and benefits equally. Any focus on the recovery of the Jewish community was secondary to the interests of the Dutch people as a whole. The national interest took priority over special group and individual interests. Jews had to find a place in this larger pattern.⁵

The practical significance of this approach became clear in connection with the repatriation of Jewish camp survivors (PLATE 70). The Dutch authorities saw them as part of the much larger group of Dutch nationals awaiting repatriation, who could not possibly all return to the country at once. Given the state of the food and housing markets, a gradual return was felt to be preferable. Organized repatriation, in cooperation with the Dutch Red Cross, therefore took place one small group at a time. In this respect, the Netherlands made a different choice from Belgium and France, which took immediate, active steps towards the swift and organized return of the survivors. Some of the 5,500 Dutch Jews outside the country returned on their own initiative; others took part in the Red Cross return programme. The major cities in the south and east of the country—Groningen, Enschede, Nijmegen, Eindhoven, Maastricht, and Breda—had reception facilities for all repatriates, where they were deloused, registered, and vetted for their political sympathies. The intention was to weed out the collaborators

⁵ Bossenbroek, De Meelstreep, 183–284.

and Germans from among the 'good Dutch people'. At this stage, the decision not to distinguish between Jews and non-Jews led to a new problem: 170 Jews, originally German and Austrian, were branded enemies of the state because of their previous nationalities and imprisoned in two camps in Valkenburg and Sittard with Dutch Nazis, Schutzstaffel (SS) members, and other German residents. They were released only after fierce protest and media attention.

Experiences of return and repatriation varied widely. Some Jews were greeted with enthusiasm, while many others—as early as 1945—described their reception as uninterested, cold, and in some cases even hostile.⁶ The fact was that the public services could barely handle the repatriation process and had a shortage of clothing and reception facilities. Another factor was the belief, fairly widespread in those days, that the government should give priority to churches and civil society organizations. Such organizations were central to pillarization (verzuiling), the Dutch social system based on tight-knit complexes of institutions known as pillars (zuilen), each united by a shared religious or ideological orientation. The situation did not begin to improve until the summer of 1945. There does not seem ever to have been a deliberate attempt to place Jews at a disadvantage in the repatriation and reception process, but their exceptional situation was never acknowledged as a reason for special treatment. Comparison with other groups of repatriates shows that this policy had the same consequences for almost everyone, but that some exceptions were made, mainly for ex-political prisoners —the surviving members of the resistance. They soon came to be seen as symbols of the heroic struggle of the Dutch under the German occupation and were held up sometimes to their own astonishment—as representatives of the nation. During the occupation, they had felt more like the exceptions.⁷

Registration was a vital step for the repatriates and the people who had come out of hiding, since Jews had been removed from the civil registers—listed as having moved abroad or to an 'unknown destination'—and had to re-register before they could act as legal persons. They would need that status when confronting the huge challenges ahead. Housing was one of the first problems. Since almost all Jewish houses had fallen into the hands of other people—sometimes collaborators—many returning Jews had

- ⁶ M. Citroen, U wordt door niemand verwacht: Nederlandse joden na kampen en onderduik (Utrecht, 1999); D. Hondius, 'Bitter Homecoming: The Return and Reception of Dutch and Stateless Jews in the Netherlands', in D. Bankier (ed.), The Jews Are Coming Back: The Return of the Jews to their Countries of Origin after WWII (Jerusalem, 2005), 108–35. An example of the journey back and subsequent reception can be found in E. Gans, Jaap en Ischa Meijer: Een joodse geschiedenis 1912–1956 (Amsterdam, 2008), 353–69.
- ⁷ A. Beening, 'Machtsstrijd en machteloosheid: De rol van de Nederlandse overheid bij de repatriëring vanuit West-Europa naar Nederland 1944–1945', in C. Kristel (ed.), *Binnenskamers: Terugkeer en opvang na de Tweede Wereldoorlog. Besluitvorming* (Amsterdam, 2002), 23–61; D. Hondius, '"Welkom" in Amsterdam: Aankomst en ontvangst van repatrianten in de hoofdstad in 1945', in C. Kristel (ed.), *Polderschouw: Terugkeer en opvang na de Tweede Wereldoorlog. Regionale verschillen* (Amsterdam, 2002), 201–21; B. de Munnick, 'Na de zogenaamde bevrijding: De terugkeer van joden in de Nederlandse samenleving', in H. Piersma (ed.), *Mensenheugenis: Terugkeer en opvang van de Tweede Wereldoorlog. Getuigenissen* (Amsterdam, 2001), 45–69.

to look for new places to live. There were temporary Jewish reception facilities in major cities where Jews could stay while looking for new homes and rebuilding their lives.⁸ A second challenge was reintegration into the labour force. Some Jews could resume their former jobs, but others had to search for new ones. Some small shopkeepers, tradespeople, and manufacturers could reopen their shops fairly easily (PLATE 7I), but many others could not regain possession or legal recognition of ownership for a long time.

The search for friends and relatives was central to the early period after the country's liberation. There were widely distributed lists of surviving Jews from camps such as Theresienstadt and Bergen-Belsen, and of repatriates registered in cities near the border, such as Enschede, Maastricht, and certain other locations. Survivors tried to obtain information about missing loved ones through the Jewish press. The Red Cross was assigned a central role in tracking down survivors and confirming the deaths of tens of thousands of victims, and its death certificates were accepted as valid legal documents by the Dutch authorities

The Reconstruction of Jewish Life

The initial stage after liberation was a time of chaos, especially for Jews. Not only had they lost most of their relatives and their work, homes, and personal networks, but almost all Jewish organizations had been liquidated. Only if enough board members returned could they regain their legal status and resume their old roles. Otherwise the Nederlands Beheersinstituut (Property Administration Institute; NBI) retained control over property and any assets, and Jews who wished to reclaim them had to go through a long process. Consequently, many familiar, trusted pre-war Jewish institutions and organizations were not (or not yet) able to contribute to the tentative rebuilding of Jewish life in 1944–5, after the country was liberated.

Instead of reviving an old Jewish organization, it was simpler to start afresh. Many new Jewish organizations sprang up in the wake of the Allied liberators. In the southern Dutch provinces in October 1944, these included the Comité voor Israëlietische Belangen (Committee for Israeli Interests) in Maastricht and the Joodse Hulpcommissie voor de Mijnstreek in Heerlen (Jewish Aid Commission for the Mining Area in Heerlen). These two organizations strove to assist Jews who came out of hiding and to rebuild Jewish life. The same pattern was repeated in many other places. These many local and regional initiatives only gradually established a degree of contact among themselves; that was difficult at first because of the chaos, poor communications, and very limited opportunities for travel. The Achilles' heel of all these organizations was funding, which was often lacking. Any Jewish assets still present were frozen, and the

⁸ P. Drenth and M.-C. Engels, 'Huis en haard: De Rotterdamse volkshuisvesting voor oorlogsslachtoffers 1945–1952', in Kristel (ed.), *Polderschouw*, 241–61.

Military Authority furnished a budget only in a few rare cases. For this reason, foreign Jewish aid organizations played a decisive role.⁹

Two small organizations established by Dutch Jewish immigrants and refugees began preparing, even before the war ended, to supply aid after liberation. They provided funds, helped to register Jews who emerged from hiding in Maastricht, and made lists of survivors to be distributed among the Dutch Jewish diaspora. Considering the scale of the problems, the two modestly sized migrant organizations could not make a large contribution. But soon two other, larger, Jewish organizations stepped in: the Jewish Relief Unit in London and, most importantly, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee ('the Joint') in New York. Thanks to their funding, their insight into the big picture, and their good contacts in the Allied military, they were able to operate effectively throughout liberated Europe, focusing on Jews who had come out of hiding and concentration camp survivors. 10 In the case of the Netherlands, the Joint sent special representatives to assist the Dutch Jews: Saul Elgart, Harry Viteles, Gertrude Pinsky, and Esther Haskins. The Joint envisaged a role for itself in the transition from the occupation to normalization, offering Jewish communities temporary assistance with their recovery until the essential institutional framework had been rebuilt and access to property and assets had been secured. 11

In the Netherlands, this aid was routed entirely through the Jewish Coordination Committee (JCC), established in January 1945 in liberated Eindhoven. The young, energetic founders had a clear plan and a solid network and could therefore count on the support of the Joint, which supplied much-needed material and financial assistance. The Joint worked with only one organization per country, so that it could keep track of its activities. Other local and regional Jewish organizations that wished to qualify for foreign aid therefore had to affiliate with the JCC—and they did, forming a large network of JCC offices, coordinated from Eindhoven at first and from Amsterdam after the liberation of the northern provinces. ¹²

The partnership between the Joint and the JCC was not a mere coincidence. The two organizations were driven by similar ideological motives—above all, they valued the unity of the Jewish community. They saw everyone affected by wartime Nazi persecution as part of their target group, not only qualifying for aid and support but

⁹ H. Vossen, 'Integratie en uitsluiting: Terugkeer en opvang van joden in Zuid-Limburg', in Kristel (ed.), *Polderschouw*, 19–38.

¹⁰ Y. Bauer, Out of the Ashes: The Impact of American Jews on Post-Holocaust European Jewry (Oxford, 1989); D. Weinberg, Recovering a Voice: West European Jewish Communities after the Holocaust (Oxford, 2015), 22–134.

¹¹ D. Weinberg, 'Patrons or Partners? Relations between the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee and the Dutch Jewish Community in the Immediate Postwar Period', in Y. Kaplan (ed.), *The Dutch Intersection: The Jews and the Netherlands in Modern History* (Leiden, 2008), 403–20.

¹² C. Brasz, Removing the Yellow Badge: The Struggle for a Jewish Community in the Postwar Netherlands (Jerusalem, 1995); E. Gans, De kleine verschillen die het leven uitmaken: Een historische studie naar joodse sociaaldemocraten en socialistisch-zionisten in Nederland (Amsterdam, 1999).

forming part of community life. In contrast to the pre-war Jewish community's diversity and division—between Orthodox and Reform, Sephardi and Ashkenazi, Zionist and anti-Zionist, secular and religious—they envisaged a new, unified community, which required a new umbrella organization (namely, the JCC). Within the JCC, this mission was buttressed by the great efforts of young Zionists, some of whom already knew each other well from the pre-war radical Zionist youth movement Zichron Ja'akow. They argued that Jews were a 'people'; religious and political dissension was secondary.

This discourse of unity was closely related to ideas circulating among intellectuals and former resistance members about a 'new Netherlands' after liberation—a country free of unwholesome social segmentation into 'pillars' and ready to turn its whole attention to the collective work of reconstruction. This attempt to reorganize the social and political landscape, led by the Nederlandse Volksbeweging (Dutch People's Movement), resulted in the founding in 1946 of the Partij van de Arbeid (Labour Party; PvdA), a merger of the former Sociaal-Democratische Arbeiderspartij (Social Democratic Workers' Party) with the Vrijzinnig-Democratische Bond (Liberal Democratic Union) and the Christelijk-Democratische Unie (Christian Democratic Union). Not coincidentally, a number of JCC members were also active in the PvdA. But while the PvdA focused on Dutch society as a whole, the JCC applied the same ideals in the context of the Jewish community. So how could a transformed Jewish community fit into a transformed Dutch society? The question remained difficult to answer.

The JCC, with strong support from the Joint, developed numerous activities. Under the energetic leadership of Bram de Jong and Jaap van Amerongen, and later of Salomon Kleerekoper, the JCC built up a national network and departments devoted to areas such as social work, legal aid, child care, Jewish institutions, and cultural activities. In January 1945 De Jong had established a biweekly Jewish periodical on his own initiative with the programmatic title of *Le-ezrath ha-am* ('To the Aid of the People'). It provided Jews who came out of hiding with all the information they needed, printed lists of survivors and practical tips, and commented on the news from a Jewish perspective. ¹⁴ After Amsterdam was liberated, the *Nieuw Israëlietisch Weekblad* (*NIW*) also began publishing again; it took over De Jong's periodical and its staff, and under the leadership of prominent editors-in-chief such as Jacob Soetendorp and Jozeph Melkman, it gave the coalescing community a renewed voice in the public domain. ¹⁵

The JCC's mission did not go unchallenged. Once the entire country had been

¹³ J. Bank, 'De theorie van de vernieuwing en de praktijk van de wederopbouw: Het Nederlandse socialisme in de tweede helft van de jaren veertig', in Bank et al. (eds.), *In dienst van het gehele volk: De Westeuropese sociaal-democratie tussen aanpassing en vernieuwing* (Amsterdam, 1987), 98–121.

¹⁴ T. Benima and F. J. Hoogewoud (eds.), *Le-ezrath ha-am: Het volk ter hulpe. Het eerste joodse blad in 1945* (Assen, 1985).

¹⁵ I. Lipschits, *Honderd jaar NIW: Het Nieuw Israëlietisch Weekblad* 1865–1965 (Amsterdam, 1966); B. Wallet, 'Geweten van de samenleving 1945–2015', *Jubileumeditie Nieuw Israëlietisch Weekblad*, 151/8–9 (2015), 79–96.

liberated, some old leaders from the Jewish community's administrative boards reappeared on the scene. They advocated the restoration of pre-war institutions and structures, including religious and political diversity. The greatest attention was devoted to the re-establishment of the local Orthodox Ashkenazi congregations (Nederlands-Israëlietische Gemeenten, NIGs), including the Amsterdam congregation (Nederlands-Israëlietische Hoofdsynagoge; NIHS). But this operation required not only assistance from the NBI, but also cooperation with the JCC, since all funding from American and British Jewish aid organizations was routed through the JCC. At the local level, cooperation between JCC offices and re-established NIGs was usually constructive, despite some friction about how to define the target group. Most of the problems related to the NIHS in Amsterdam and particularly to the restoration of the national Orthodox Ashkenazi denomination (Nederlands-Israëlitisch Kerkgenootschap; NIK). Although the NIHS and NIK were officially religious, denominational organizations, they had served, ever since 1814, as the main mouthpieces of the Jews in Amsterdam and in Dutch society. This was the source of the friction; the JCC also presented itself as a representative of the Jewish community and was a more inclusive organization, representing not only Orthodox, but also Reform and secular Jews. But the NIK, along with the much smaller Sephardi denomination (Portugees-Israëlitisch Kerkgenootschap; PIK), sought to reclaim its dominant pre-war role and maintain its moderate Orthodox character. 16

The reformists associated with the JCC had the upper hand at first. The war had forged bonds of solidarity between Jews of all stripes, and because the JCC advocated support for everyone it gained widespread sympathy. At the same time, interest in Zionism and support for the cause were skyrocketing. There had been a high-profile Zionist movement in the Netherlands before the Second World War, but it had remained relatively small and had a strained relationship with parts of the Jewish administrative and religious establishment. The events of the war had made the idea of a common future in Palestine for the Jewish people persuasive to many who had previously taken a neutral or adversarial stance towards Zionism. This greatly expanded the ideological support base for the JCC's policies.¹⁷

Yet the restorationists also had their sympathizers. Aside from the administrators who saw it as their duty to rebuild the pre-war community as far as possible, these were mostly Orthodox Jews. Like the reformists, they regarded the country's liberation as a *Stunde Null*, a historic juncture that afforded an opportunity to start from scratch. But they hoped to seize that opportunity to strengthen the Orthodox character of Dutch Jewry. To achieve that goal, they needed the traditional community structures, and that

¹⁶ C. Kristel, 'Leiderschap na de ondergang: De strijd om de macht in joods naoorlogs Nederland', in Kristel (ed.), *Binnenskamers*, 209–34.

¹⁷ C. Brasz, 'Onontbeerlijk maar eigengereid: De zionistische inmenging in de naoorlogse joodse gemeenschap', in Kristel (ed.), *Binnenskamers*, 235–60; Gans, *De kleine verschillen*, 557–602.

was one reason they supported the traditional administrative elite. In Orthodox reconstruction efforts, a major role was reserved for the rabbinate. Only three chief rabbis had survived the war: Salomon Rodrigues Pereira, hakham (chief rabbi) of the Portuguese Jewish community in The Hague, who had returned from Britain as a military chaplain to the Princess Irene Brigade, as well as Salomon Heertjes from 's-Hertogenbosch and Justus Tal from Utrecht, who had been in hiding. Tal had been made part of the Amsterdam rabbinate during the war, after Utrecht was declared judenrein (the Nazi term for an area 'cleansed' of Jews). Because the last (deputy) chief rabbi from Amsterdam, Simon Dasberg, had been murdered in Bergen-Belsen, Tal provisionally assumed the duties of chief rabbi in Amsterdam and spoke at the first post-war service in the Portuguese Synagogue on 7 May 1945. Besides these chief rabbis, a handful of other rabbis returned, such as Abraham Prins and Aron Schuster. The chief rabbis and the others, together with avowed Orthodox leaders, formed the Adviescommissie voor het Opperrabbinaat (Advisory Committee for the Chief Rabbinate; ACO), where they discussed their strategy for moving reconstruction in a more Orthodox direction. As early as August 1945 that led to the establishment of the Chief Rabbinate for the Netherlands (Opperrabbinaat voor Nederland), a forum for close cooperation between the Dutch chief rabbis. They took on a number of responsibilities that had fallen within the purview of local Jewish congregations and decided that from then on they would make joint decisions about matters of principle in accordance with halakhah, Jewish religious law. This would allow them to form a stronger bloc in opposition to secular and Zionist attempts to change the nature of the Jewish community. 18

The chief rabbis received strong support for their endeavours from the Dutch branch of the strictly Orthodox Agudat Yisrael movement, which had opposed Zionism and secularism since it was founded. Like the Zionist movement, this ideological opponent developed all sorts of activities—in cooperation with its workers' division, Po'alei Agudat Yisrael (PAI)—in order to build a sturdy framework for religious reconstruction. Regional days for *limud* (study) were designed to encourage the dissemination of knowledge about Jewish traditions; the Agudat Yisrael children and youth association Hasjalsjelet (The Chain) was established to provide an Orthodox Jewish climate for children, and new periodicals offered spiritual guidance. ¹⁹ A PAI house with a kosher kitchen was founded in Amsterdam; although it was intended mainly for war orphans and singles, others could make use of its facilities too. The partnership between the Agudists and the chief rabbis worked well partly because the latter were part of the movement. The same could not be said of the other rabbis, some of whom were active in the Orthodox Zionist Mizrachi movement, where a rift was opening

¹⁸ B. Wallet, 'Om "een uitgeteekenden joodsche levensweg": De reconstructie van het religieuze jodendom in Nederland, 1945–1960', in H. Berg and B. Wallet (eds.), *Wie niet weg is, is gezien: Joods Nederland na 1945* (Zwolle, 2010), 96–117.

¹⁹ S. Emanuel, Kamnu we-nitoded: Pirkei zikhronot mi-peilut chinuchit bisherit ha-pleita be-Holland (Sha'alvim, 2008).

up. The left wing focused mainly on Zionism and worked in close partnership with 'secular' Zionists (socialist or otherwise), while the right wing, despite a firm belief in Zionism, feared the spirit of reform propagated by the Zionists in the JCC and preferred to work with the Agudists in various areas.

One of these joint projects was the launch of a yeshiva, a Talmud school in the eastern European tradition. One strategy for strengthening Orthodoxy was to encourage immigration, specifically by Orthodox east European survivors of the Holocaust. Before the war, Dutch Jews had always rejected the idea of a yeshiva and opted instead for the western European seminary model, in which classical Jewish sources were approached in an academic fashion. Now, however, they saw the need for reinforcements from the East. They met their financial goals thanks to the help of the international Orthodox aid organization Va'ad Ha-hatzala, whose Dutch branch was made up of Agudists and Mizrachists.²⁰ The Dutch national authorities gave permission for a rabbi and pupils to immigrate from Budapest.²¹ The yeshiva was housed in the former Jewish orphanage in Leiden. The initiative had to be abandoned after a few years, despite success on several fronts: the programme of education ran smoothly, the Dutch chief rabbis were closely involved, and even Dutch Jewish boys took lessons there. There was simply not enough funding to keep a yeshiva in operation in the Netherlands, as there was in and around Antwerp, in France, and in Great Britain.²²

Money was ultimately the Achilles' heel of the reformists in the JCC as well. As long as the JCC could depend on funding from the Joint, it could expand steadily and work towards its goal of becoming the Jewish umbrella organization for the Netherlands. But the Joint, which eventually pumped a total of one million guilders into Jewish life in the Netherlands, made it clear that as soon as the embargo on Jewish property and assets was lifted, its assistance would cease. Dutch Jews would have to feather their own nest. To avoid overwhelming Dutch Jews with a flood of requests for donations, the charities in question devised a centralized fundraising method. Two national organizations had the task of collecting money, each for part of the year. The first was the Collectieve Israël Actie (Collective Israel Campaign), which grew out of the Haganah campaign held in 1947-8 for the benefit of the nascent Israeli army. This campaign raised funds for causes in Israel and distributed the money among various support committees in the Netherlands dedicated to such causes. The second fundraising organization was the Centrale Financieringsactie (Central Funding Campaign; Cefina), which collected money for many Dutch Jewish causes. But Cefina's objectives did not include raising the entire budget of the JCC.²³

²⁰ A. Grobman, Battling for Souls: The Vaad Hatzala Rescue Committee in Post-War Europe (New York, 2004).

 $^{^{21}\,}$ C. K. Berghuis, Geheel ontdaan van onbaatzuchtigheid: Het Nederlandse toelatingsbeleid voor vluchtelingen en displaced persons van 1945 tot 1956 (Amsterdam, 1999), 61–2.

²² Wallet, 'Om "een uitgeteekenden joodsche levensweg"'.

²³ I. Lipschits, Tsedaka: Een halve eeuw Joods Maatschappelijk Werk in Nederland (Zutphen, 1997).

So in 1947, when the Joint announced that it would be shifting its financial aid to parts of the Jewish world in greater need of such assistance, the JCC had no choice but to end its activities. Its remaining assets were distributed among the pre-war organizations, which were re-established one after another and resumed their work. The NIK, in particular, picked up where it had left off, helping local Jewish congregations with their religious and social reconstruction efforts and presenting itself to the national authorities as the official representative of the Jewish community.

This ran parallel to developments in Dutch society in general, where after initial optimism, ideal visions of a new nation died out, and the 'pillarized' pre-war social structure filled the gap. The PvdA experiment, for example, soon ran into a setback: many of the liberal democrats who had joined the party left in 1948 to merge with the liberal Partij van de Vrijheid (Freedom Party) into the Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie (People's Party for Freedom and Democracy; VVD). In Jewish circles, the old structures reasserted themselves, and the restorationists were able to carry out some of their plans. Dutch Jews never achieved the unity many longed for, instead reverting to their pre-war diversity. Yet on closer scrutiny, we can see that the reformists had their victories too. Although they did not manage to transform the framework of the Dutch Jewish community, they were able to put their ideals into practice in significant respects. Their greatest success was unquestionably the survival of the JCC's social division as an independent entity, Joods Maatschappelijk Werk (Jewish Social Work; JMW), established in 1946, which took over the role of the pre-war poor relief committees and, entirely in keeping with the JCC ideology, supported all Jews regardless of religious or political affiliation. Both Orthodox and Reform congregations were represented on the JMW board, alongside representatives of secular Jews. The JMW's responsibilities grew at a striking pace, especially from the 1950s onwards, with the expansion of the welfare state, and the organization played an increasing role in keeping the Jewish institutional framework running smoothly.²⁴

After the JCC was disbanded in 1948, the focus of the debate shifted to the NIK. The former JCC leaders argued that the NIK had to change in nature from a mere religious denomination to a social and cultural organization that served all Dutch Jews. One after another, they became active in the NIK, not so much for religious motives as to defend a Jewish nationalist strand within it. They received the heartfelt support of the Nederlandse Zionistenbond (Dutch Zionist Union; NZB); although Zionists believed that ideally all Dutch Jews should resettle in Palestine (or, after 1948, the State of Israel), they recognized that Jews in the Netherlands needed a national umbrella organization for the time being. After the demise of the JCC, the NIK was the obvious choice. As they saw it, the NIK's job was to keep all the Jews in the Netherlands unified until the time came for them all to emigrate—or else be assimilated into Dutch society. This belief gave rise to a peculiar paradox; those who believed in the impending dissolution

²⁴ Lipschits, Tsedaka.

of the Dutch Jewish community made the most active contribution to reconstruction. They rebuilt the community so that Jewish nationalist sentiment would not be dissipated and in order to cultivate ties with Palestine/Israel and then open the way to a swift *shelilat hagalut*, 'liquidation of the diaspora'.

The reformists took on important, front-line roles in the NIK and Jewish congregations, where synagogue councils still followed the old mode of regular elections, which yielded large gains for Zionist groups. They brought about the adoption of a number of measures promoting inclusiveness. Before the war, foreign Jews, especially those from Germany and eastern Europe, had not had the chance to participate fully, because they were not Dutch Jews. Once the rules were changed so that their nationality was no longer a barrier to full membership, they set to work for the Jewish community with zeal. In Amsterdam, the Verbond van Midden- en Oost-Europese Joden (Union of Central and Eastern European Jews) even took part in synagogue council elections, consistently winning significant numbers of seats.²⁵ A second measure related to women's participation. Even before the war, there had been advocates of allowing women to vote so that they could participate in the governance of the Jewish community. Although most Jewish congregations (NIGs) favoured giving women both the right to vote and the right to stand for election, the chief rabbis stood in the way of the latter for the time being. But for the first time, women could vote along with men and make their voices heard at general assemblies.

What was unsuccessful, however, was the attempt to transform Jewish communities into the ideal form known by the German term Großgemeinden: congregations in which various strains of religious Judaism coexisted under a single organizational roof. The Sephardi congregation (Portugees-Israëlietische Gemeente; PIG) in Amsterdam decided to turn down the Ashkenazi proposals for a merger, preferring to carry forward their own traditions in an undiluted form, no matter how small their community had become. The concordat of 1801 governing the relationship between Sephardi and Ashkenazi Jews in the Netherlands was amended, however; the borders between the two communities became more fluid and they began to work together in new areas. Reform Judaism was a thornier issue. Reform Jews themselves wanted to be absorbed into a Großgemeinde, within which they could maintain their own rite. In spite of initial optimism bolstered by the reformist discourse of unity, and the establishment of many cooperative ties, the plan ultimately foundered on the opposition of the chief rabbis, who demanded that the Reform Jews acknowledge the authority of the Orthodox chief rabbi in the field of family law (relating to marriages, divorces, and conversion to Judaism). This was unacceptable to the Reform Jews, who therefore remained an independent Liberaal Joodse Gemeente (Reform Jewish Congregation; LJG) in Amsterdam alongside the PIG and the NIHS.²⁶

²⁵ I. Lipschits, Rafael Gerstenfeld 1900–1976: Een man van goede daden (Zutphen, 2004).

²⁶ Wallet, Van Trigt, and Polak, Die ons heeft laten leven, 31-2.

In summary, the chaotic and exciting initial stage of rebuilding Jewish life was followed by a return to the old structures and the pre-war religious and political divisions. Nonetheless, the reformist ideals had left their mark in various ways: the success of the JMW, reforms within Jewish congregations, and an ongoing debate within the framework of the NIK about the substance and meaning of Jewish identity in the Netherlands.

Wartime Foster-Children

One of the most painful experiences of the stage immediately following the country's liberation was the complex custody battle over the group known as wartime foster-children (*oorlogspleegkinderen*). Around 4,000 children had survived the war in hiding with foster-families in the Netherlands. In about half of those cases, at least one parent returned; those children were reunited with their parents. But 2,041 children had been orphaned; 1,370 of them were under the age of 15. A fierce conflict ensued over who would raise these children, with the heroes of the Second World War—the resistance and the foster-parents—on one side and the Jewish community on the other.

At first, the government took steps towards a characteristically Dutch solution, forming a Nationale Commissie Oorlogspleegkinderen (National Wartime Foster-Children Commission; Commissie OPK) as early as May 1945, on which the relevant interest groups were represented. This commission was tasked with developing a policy and served as the interim guardian of all the Jewish orphans until it decided on their final placement. The commission president was the Calvinist resistance fighter and legal expert Gezina van der Molen; its secretary was Sándor Baracz, a Jew; and there were twenty-three other members. By August 1945 the Jewish community had set up its own organization, Le-ezrath Ha-jeled (To the Aid of the Children), which was preoccupied with tracking down wartime foster-children at first, but which gradually became involved in the legal battle over their future. The Commissie OPK included members of Le-ezrath Ha-jeled, but they were a clear minority.²⁷

The commission was more or less divided into two opposing camps. Among former resistance members, the dominant view was that the orphans should not be removed from their familiar surroundings again and should therefore be left with their foster-families. Some members of this faction were also motivated by the conviction, sometimes unstated, that now that the children's lives had been saved, it was time to save their souls. An upbringing in a Christian family, whether Protestant or Catholic, would take care of that. The only exceptions they proposed to acknowledge, out of respect for strong religious feelings, were children whose parents had been devout Orthodox Jews. Le-ezrath Ha-jeled and some of the other Jewish commission members, in contrast, felt strongly that the children should be returned to a Jewish environ-

²⁷ E. Verhey, Om het joodse kind (Amsterdam, 1991); G. van Klinken, Strijdbaar & omstreden: Een biografie van de calvinistische verzetsvrouw Gezina van der Molen (Amsterdam, 2006).

ment and raised by surviving relatives or in Jewish children's homes. Each group claimed to have the children's interests at heart, but there was another important consideration in the Jewish camp. What future could there be for the Jewish community, they asked themselves, if it was 'robbed' of some of its children immediately after the war?²⁸

The struggle over the Jewish children was also complicated for other reasons. The Jewish community was forced into an adversarial relationship with the former resistance, a group that commanded great respect in Dutch society, and to whom they themselves often had such a debt of gratitude. Furthermore, they formed anything but a united front. Some Dutch Jews, including some Jewish members of the Commissie OPK, could live with the outcome if the children remained in their foster families.

On the other hand, there were former resistance fighters, such as the liberal Reformed pastor Jacob Jetzes Kalma, who took the side of Le-ezrath Ha-jeled. Kalma wrote two impassioned brochures declaring that 'we must bring the Jewish children back to the homes Hitler forced them to leave'.²⁹ The clash within the commission did not remain behind closed doors, but grew into a broad public debate focused on whether the children should be seen primarily as Dutch or as Jewish. Those who saw them as mainly Dutch argued that their perspective eliminated the pernicious distinction made by the occupying regime, while the other camp saw that same perspective as a continuation of the practice of robbing Jews of their identity. The latter group had supporters in Palestine; as early as 1946, the Ashkenazi chief rabbi Isaac Herzog visited the Netherlands to urge Queen Wilhelmina and the authorities to return the wartime foster-children to the Jewish community without delay.

The conflict started to escalate in July 1946, when eleven of the fifteen Jewish members resigned in protest against the commission's policy, which mainly reflected the position of most former resistance members. A second commission, headed by the leading Jewish legal scholar E. M. Meijers, mended the rift with the proposal that all children whose parents had been registered as members of Jewish denominations in 1940—in fact, more than 90 per cent of the foster-children—should receive a Jewish upbringing. But this solution, too, proved unsatisfactory in practice, and in March 1949 came a second rupture, this one irreparable. By that stage, the commission had already made decisions about 1,004 children: 403 had been assigned to the non-Jewish foster-parents, and 601 placed under Jewish guardianship. The remaining 359 children were then subject to the standard procedure: the Voogdijraad (Guardianship Council) in Amsterdam ended up assigning 80 per cent of them to Jewish foster-parents or children's homes.

²⁸ J. S. Fishman, 'Jewish War Orphans in the Netherlands: The Guardianship Issue, 1945–1950', *The Wiener Library Bulletin*, 27/30–1 (1973–4), 31–6; id., 'The War Orphan Controversy in the Netherlands: Majority–Minority Relations', *DJH* i. 421–32.

²⁹ J. S. Fishman, 'The Ecumenical Challenge of Jewish Survival: Pastor Kalma and Post-War Dutch Society, 1946', *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, 15 (1978), 461–76.

The children placed in the Jewish community went to relatives or Jewish foster families, or they were assigned to Le-ezrath Ha-jeled, which placed most of them in Jewish children's homes. The main Jewish children's homes were the 'general Jewish' Bergstichting in Laren, the Orthodox Rudelsheimstichting in Hilversum, and the Joods Jongenshuis (Jewish Boys' Home) in Amsterdam. In 1950 the three homes joined with Le-ezrath Ha-jeled, becoming the Gefusioneerde Joodse Instellingen voor Kinderbescherming (Merged Jewish Institutions for Child Protection), or simply the Fusie (Merger). As the generation of wartime foster-children grew up, the children's homes played an ever smaller role. Furthermore, some of the children emigrated collectively to Israel. In 1954, a total of 335 orphans emigrated. Starting in the 1950s, the Fusie worked closely with the JMW, a process that culminated in a complete merger in 1981. From then on, the JMW was responsible for children's and young people's services, including work for Jewish orphans and foster-children.³⁰

The transfer of the remaining files to the Voogdijraad by no means ended the controversy over the wartime foster-children, as some foster parents refused to hand their charges over to Jewish relatives or Le-ezrath Ha-jeled. One case, known as the Anneke Beekman affair, came to symbolize this conflict. After 1945 the future of Anneke Beekman, a child of Orthodox Jewish parents who had gone into hiding with the Catholic sisters 'Aunt Ge' and 'Aunt Bets' van Moorst in Hilversum, was a contentious matter. Once it became clear that her parents had been murdered, the tug of war began: the Van Moorst sisters wanted to remain Anneke's guardians and give her a Catholic upbringing, but her Jewish relatives wanted to bring her back to Judaism in her own family circle. The case eventually went to court, where guardianship was awarded to the Jewish family. Then the Van Moorst sisters sent Anneke into hiding, along with another Jewish girl, Betty Meljado. Despite fierce protests, police searches, and political pressure, the girls were impossible to find. While Betty resurfaced in 1954 in a Belgian convent, Anneke did not return to the public domain until she reached 21, the official age of majority. It transpired that she had spent the whole time in Belgian and French convents.31

The Beekman affair brought out a sharp contrast between the Jewish, liberal, and Protestant media on the one hand and the Catholic on the other. The archbishop of Utrecht, Mgr. Jan de Jong, and other Catholic clergymen were unwilling to put pressure on the Van Moorst sisters to hand over the child to her Jewish relatives. De Jong even complained of Jewish 'rabble-rousing' with 'inaccurate and biased articles in the press'. The Catholic press took the clergy and the Van Moorst sisters under their wing.

³⁰ Lipschits, Tsedaka; P. M. Manasse, Het onderbrengen van joodse oorlogspleegkinderen: De rol van de Stichting Le-Ezrath Ha-Jeled 1945–1950 en de Gefusioneerde Joodse Instellingen voor Kinderbescherming 1950–1975 (Purmerend, 2004).

³¹ Verhey, Om het joodse kind, 177–204; [De] verdwijning van Anneke Beekman en Rebecca Meljado: Witboek (Amsterdam, 1954).

Liberals and Protestants saw the Beekman affair as a typical example of Catholic imperialism, while Jews took it as a sign that Catholics would not tolerate their existence as Jews and saw them merely as candidates for conversion.³²

Restoration of Legal Rights

In the Second World War, the Jews had been systematically deprived of their rights; they lost their social positions, jobs, businesses, real property, houses, collections, household effects, and financial assets. It was clear to the government-in-exile in London that one challenge after liberation would be the restoration of legal rights. On 17 September 1944, Royal Decree E 100 (the Restoration of Legal Rights Decree) became law. Its provisions had far-reaching consequences. Unlike French post-war policy, which was based on ordinary property rights, E 100 stated that the courts could decide in accordance with the requirements of 'reasonableness and fairness' in conflicts over stolen, often Jewish, property. This entailed not only that Jews would *not* automatically have their property returned to them, but that their interests would be weighed in the balance against those of the people who had taken possession of the goods, sold them, and resold them in wartime. In other words, the Netherlands chose to apply distributive justice, which is normally used to determine the distribution of rights, duties, and wealth in society, rather than corrective justice, the foundation of civil law.³³

The Raad voor het Rechtsherstel (Council for the Restoration of Rights) was established to bring about the restoration of rights. Jews who wished to recover their property had to submit well-documented applications. The next step was an attempt to reach an amicable settlement; if that failed, the council's Afdeling Rechtspraak (Jurisdiction Department) made a ruling. Consequently, Jews who returned from hiding, from the camps, or from abroad were faced not only with a formidable bureaucracy, but also, in many cases, with a bitter struggle for restoration of their rights. The council's rulings sometimes showed a degree of arbitrariness, especially in the early period, amid the chaos of reconstruction.

In the process of restoring legal rights, as in other areas, the belief that Jews should not receive special treatment had substantial influence. There was general legislation applicable to all who had been deprived of their rights in the war, and the relevant organizations therefore also had a general character, serving all 'war victims'. Strikingly, separate legal arrangements were made for members of the military and public

³² J. S. Fishman, 'The Anneke Beekman Affair and the Dutch News Media', *Jewish Social Studies*, 40 (1978), 3–24.

³³ G. Aalders, Bij verordening: De roof van het joodse vermogen in Nederland en het naoorlogse rechtsherstel. Bijlage 3 van het Eindrapport van de Contactgroep Tegoeden WO II (Amsterdam, 2000); id., Berooid: De beroofde joden en het Nederlandse restitutiebeleid sinds 1945 (Amsterdam, 2001); W. Veraart, Ontrechting en rechtsherstel in Nederland en Frankrijk in de jaren van bezetting en wederopbouw (Rotterdam, 2005). For a critical examination of the post-war restitution of legal rights, see also I. Lipschits, De kleine sjoa: Joden in naoorlogs Nederland (Amsterdam, 2001).

officials. Army and navy personnel received their back pay as soon as the summer of 1945.

Material damage caused by the war had to be reported to the local Schade Enquete Commissie (Damage Investigation Commission). Such commissions dealt only with real property, however; to recover financial assets, it was necessary to go through the Raad voor het Rechtsherstel.³⁴ During the war, Jews had to deposit their money and valuable papers with Lippman, Rosenthal & Co. (LiRo), known as the robber bank, which had been set up to strip them of their assets. From 1948 onwards, it was officially renamed the Liquidatie van Verwaltung Sarphatistraat (Liquidation of the Sarphatistraat Administration; LVVS). Not until 1949–51, when most murdered Jews were officially declared dead in the *Staatscourant* (Government Gazette), could their assets be returned to any surviving family members. That process stretched on until the LVVS was brought to an end in 1958.

The JCC and the Joint did what they could to assist Jews in their struggle for the restoration of their rights, providing legal advice, financial support, and bridging loans for re-established businesses. The Kring van Joodsche Ondernemers voor Herstel (Circle of Jewish Businesspeople for Recovery), headed by Karel Jozef Edersheim, and the Joodsche Commissie voor Herstel (Jewish Committee for Restoration) also worked towards the swift restoration of rights. A few Jewish lawyers—the most prominent was Heiman Sanders (1888–1958) in Rotterdam—played a central part in assistance for individual Jews and the public debate about restoration of legal rights. ³⁵

Although the Royal Decrees issued in London, most importantly E 100, were aimed at a rapid return to normality in the interest of rebuilding the country, the process was slow, formalistic, and bureaucratic. Furthermore, the general public and the civil service showed considerable resistance to the restoration of legal rights. So even though Jews eventually recovered around 90 per cent of their assets, real property, and other wartime losses, they later looked back on the process as a whole with very little satisfaction.³⁶

Besides the money and goods deposited with LiRo, many Jews had left some of their finances and possessions in safekeeping with friends and acquaintances, who became known as *bewariërs*, from *bewaar* ('keep') plus *ariër* (the Nazi term 'Aryan'). After the war, these *bewariërs* took various stances. Some had safeguarded the money and goods and gave them back without further ado, while others had spent the money and sold the goods to get by in wartime. Still others denied having been given anything in the first place and kept the Jewish goods. This last category was the subject of an especially large number of stories, later made famous by Marga Minco in her short

³⁴ M.-J. Vos and S. ter Braake, Rechtsherstel na de Tweede Wereldoorlog van geroofd joods onroerend goed (Amsterdam, 2013).
³⁵ W. J. Veraart, 'Sanders contra Lieftinck', in Kristel (ed.), Binnenskamers, 173–208.

³⁶ Bossenbroek, De Meelstreep, 367–417; R. Grüter, Strijd om gerechtigheid: Joodse verzekeringstegoeden en de Tweede Wereldoorlog (Amsterdam, 2015), 65–129.

novel *Het bittere kruid* (1957; published in English as *Bitter Herbs*, 1960). Since there were not usually any official receipts—too great a risk in wartime—the Jewish survivors had little or no legal means of recovering their property

Purges

One of the greatest challenges facing the public authorities after liberation was 'purging', or removing, Nazi sympathizers and collaborators from the political leadership, the public sector, and participation in public life more generally. A portion of the Dutch population had come to support Nazi ideology, and the members of the Dutch Nazi party (NSB) and the Nazi paramilitary SS had not been the only ones guilty of various forms of collaboration.³⁷ Purges were an important subject within the Jewish community too—purges not only of Dutch society in general, but also of the Jewish community. Some Jews, such as Ans van Dijk, Bernhard Joseph, and Branca Simons, had committed war crimes such as treason or aiding the occupying regime. They were tried with other collaborators and—in accordance with the general principle applied only in the Netherlands—the life-threatening danger they had experienced as Jews was hardly considered as a mitigating factor. In fact, their sentences were relatively harsh; Ans van Dijk received the death penalty, and other Jewish war criminals were refused clemency, which was granted to other German and Dutch war criminals.³⁸

But the debate on purges within the Jewish community was dominated by the question of the Jewish Council. Many people saw the members of the various Jewish Councils—with a few exceptions, such as the one in Enschede—as Jewish collaborators who had aided the occupying regime and were therefore implicated in its crimes. There was a strong demand for them to be put on trial—a demand focused especially on the two presidents of the Amsterdam Jewish Council, Abraham Asscher and David Cohen. Some people, such as the distinguished Zionist lawyer Abel Herzberg, defended them with the argument that they had been trying to avoid a worse outcome. But in spite of their efforts, Asscher and Cohen were arrested on 6 November 1947 on suspicion of collaboration by the special prosecutor N. J. C. Sikkel of the Bijzonder Gerechtshof in Amsterdam, the court established to try defendants accused of treason and other war crimes. After a month, the two men were provisionally released, and in 1951 the charges were dropped, as they were in many other such cases in the Netherlands.³⁹

³⁷ A. D. Belinfante, In plaats van bijltjesdag: De geschiedenis van de Bijzondere Rechtspleging na de Tweede Wereldoorlog (Assen, 1978); K. Groen, Landverraad: De berechting van collaborateurs in Nederland (Weesp, 1984); P. Romijn, Snel, streng en rechtvaardig: Politiek beleid inzake de bestraffing en reclassering van 'foute' Nederlanders (Utrecht, 1989).

³⁸ K. Groen, Als slachtoffers daders worden: De zaak van de joodse verraadster Ans van Dijk (Baarn, 1994).

³⁹ C. Kristel, Geschiedschrijving als opdracht: Abel Herzberg, Jacques Presser en Loe de Jong over de jodenvervolging (Amsterdam, 1998), 135–74; A. Kuiper, Een wijze ging voorbij: Het leven van Abel J. Herzberg (Amsterdam, 1997), 313–40.

In contrast, the Joodse Ereraad (Jewish Honour Court), established by the JCC in 1946, did reach a verdict. The lay judges in this tribunal were Jews who had not compromised themselves in any way during the war. The intention was for the honour court to judge all the Jews whose record was deemed questionable. The aim of this internal Jewish purge was to allow only those judged to be 'clean' to participate in the work of reconstruction. All Jewish organizations were expected to abide by the honour court's rulings. It heard some twenty cases in total, with Asscher and Cohen in the spotlight. They were both convicted of going too far in assisting the occupying regime and barred for life from official positions in the Jewish community. Asscher refused to acknowledge the honour court's authority, but Cohen fought the ruling tooth and nail. As a result of his protest, the final ruling was deferred pending the possibility of appeals proceedings. By this time, the return of the NIK had given the honour court a controversial status as a relic of the JCC. A number of Jewish organizations decided no longer to abide by the honour court's rulings and appointed 'convicted' people to official positions. Ultimately, the decision was made to dissolve the honour court without carrying out the sentences of anyone who had appealed, including Cohen. But Cohen and a number of other former Jewish Council administrators remained controversial figures to many Jews. In 1955 Cohen published his book Zwervend en dolend (Wandering and Roaming), about assistance to German Jewish refugees in the Netherlands from 1933 to 1940, in which he had played a central role. This was an attempt to improve, at least somewhat, his tarnished image in the Jewish community.⁴⁰

Jews in the Repillarized Netherlands

Social Position

Although the first post-war years had led to the reconstruction of the Jewish community, Dutch Jews were still grappling with serious uncertainties. Should they remain in the country or leave? Although many of them expressed a desire to emigrate, only a small minority actually took the step. Dutch Jews surprised even themselves by remaining in the country and putting great energy into rebuilding their community. The form taken by the Jewish community after 1945 was dictated in large part by the scope afforded to it by the national authorities. Despite attempts to bring about a social 'breakthrough', the old pre-war system of pillarization was revived. Government policy took account of the range of religious and ideological groups and financed the

⁴⁰ N. K. C. A. in 't Veld, *De Joodse Ereraad* (The Hague, 1989); P. Schrijvers, *Rome, Athene, Jeruzalem: Leven en werk van prof. dr. David Cohen* (Groningen, 2000), 276–88; I. de Haan, 'An Unresolved Controversy: The Jewish Honor Court in the Netherlands, 1945–1950', in L. Jockush and G. N. Finder (eds.), *Jewish Honor Courts: Revenge, Retribution, and Reconciliation in Europe and Israel after the Holocaust* (Detroit, Mich., 2015), 107–36. Cohen's own study is *Zwervend en dolend: De Joodse vluchtelingen in Nederland in de jaren 1933–1940* (Haarlem, 1955).

organizations affiliated with each one. Given this approach, the Jewish community had little choice, after the Joint withdrew its financial support for the JCC, but to present itself as a religious denomination once again: the Orthodox Ashkenazi NIK, founded in 1870, with the Sephardi PIK and Verbond van Liberaal-Religieuze Joden (Alliance of Reform Religious Jews; VLRJ) as its junior partners.

Within the restored system of pillarization, the Jewish community had its own legitimated place in the Netherlands, alongside the different varieties of Protestants and Catholics. Jews were granted the scope and the funding to rebuild their own Jewish institutional structures. But that scope was severely limited by a separate factor: the community's decimation by the Holocaust. As a small community, Jews were no longer invited to regular meetings with the national authorities, as they had been before the war. Instead, the representative of the Mennonites (Algemene Doopsgezinde Sociëteit) was expected to represent the Jews as well. Even when public authorities dealt with issues that concerned Jews directly, such as taking stock of war damage to places of worship, the community was not invited to participate. The same attitude is illustrated by the revision of legislation on Sunday as a day of rest (the Zondagswet) in 1951. Although Jews had traditionally been permitted to sell their wares on Sunday instead of Shabbat, their interests were not initially considered in debates on the new legislation. Only after vigorous protest were arrangements made for some Jewish businesses to remain open on Sunday, if the owner was certified by the chief rabbi as leading an Orthodox life.41

When the national authorities did become directly involved in Jewish life, the general outcome was not much better. Before the war, ritual slaughter had been permitted throughout the Netherlands; afterwards it was narrowed in scope to fourteen cities. Moreover, the volume of kosher slaughter became tied to the number of Jewish consumers—a measure to prevent the sale of kosher products on the open market. This made it impossible for kosher butcher shops to turn a profit outside major cities. It was permissible to export kosher meat, however, particularly to countries where kosher slaughter was prohibited, such as Switzerland, or where there was an acute shortage of meat, such as Israel. But that decision was motivated primarily by Dutch economic interests. In the 1950s—after the considerable attention paid to the ravaged Jewish community by politicians, the media, and society in the years directly following the war—it was as if there were hardly any Jews left in the Netherlands. Jews had become a marginal group, allowed to exist, but largely overlooked.

⁴¹ E. Gans, 'Gojse broodnijd: De strijd tussen joden en niet-joden rond de naoorlogse Winkelsluitingswet 1945–1951', in C. Kristel et al. (eds.), *Met alle geweld: Botsingen en tegenstellingen in burgerlijk Nederland* (Amsterdam, 2003), 195–213, 356–60.

⁴² B. Wallet, 'Ritual Slaughter, Religious Plurality and the Secularization of Dutch Society (1919–2011)', in J. Duyndam, A.-M. Korte, and M. Poorthuis (eds.), *Sacrifice in Modernity: Community, Ritual, Identity* (Leiden, 2017), 147–63.

In the repillarized social order, their community's right to exist and Jewish religious life were not at risk. But pillarization did lead to a strong emphasis on Jewish identity as a religion, with little scope or visibility for alternative or secular forms of Judaism. Jews once again became the textbook example of a minority, because Dutch society as a whole saw itself as 'generally Christian' (*algemeen christelijk*, a term often used in the names of organizations serving all Christian denominations). Within the context of pillarization, there was a broad consensus—before and after the war—on a public morality that the liberal leader Johan Rudolph Thorbecke had defined in the nineteenth century as 'Christianity over religious dissension'.

Centre and Periphery

The organized Jewish community, which had about 30,000 members at the time, also emphasized strong institutions and a well-defined centre. Rabbis and Zionist leaders defined the nature of Jewish identity, asserting that it was primarily religious and/or Zionist. By this stage, most Dutch Jews had re-registered with the NIK, although only a minority lived in the Orthodox tradition, and many did not support the denomination financially. Jews not affiliated with any subgroup were still fairly small in number, and were seen as a problematic category by the rabbis and the class of community leaders; they were the *reḥokim*, 'the far ones', who had to be gathered in from the periphery to the centre of Jewish life. These 'marginal Jews'—as Sylvain Wijnberg described them, borrowing a term from the social psychologist Kurt Lewin—were Jews on the outskirts of the community, who often did not belong to Jewish organizations and were frequently in mixed marriages. After 1945, some of them even changed their Jewish family names to names that could not be identified as Jewish. They remained in hiding, so to speak, even after the war, generally motivated by fear of a recurrence of the war, and of antisemitism.

The community leaders aimed to bring these marginal Jews closer to the centre, and Jewish organizations developed numerous outreach activities for that purpose. One was a corps of travelling teachers managed by the NIK's Centrale Onderwijscommissie (Central Education Commission), who criss-crossed the country, stopping even in the smallest villages, to give 'Jewish lessons' to Jewish children—often teaching only a handful of pupils, or even just one. They informed the children about Jewish holidays and customs, taught them basic Hebrew, and told them about the new State of Israel. They generally came for only an hour a week, but their significance can hardly be overstated. For many children and their parents, these teachers were the only link to the Jewish community. Koos and Ina Caneel-Polak, a married couple who travelled around

⁴³ One characteristic example of this approach is W. F. Klein and M. Kopuit, *De joden in Nederland: Een beeld van hun leven na 1945* (Assen, 1969).

⁴⁴ S. Wijnberg, De joden in Amsterdam: Een studie over verandering in hun attitudes (Assen, 1967).

 $^{^{45}}$ K. Polak, 'Een nieuwe naam—een nieuw bestaan? Joodse naamsveranderingen in Nederland na 1945', $ICODO\,3/4$ (1998), 40–50.

the country together for decades, were the perfect symbol of this group of itinerant teachers. An 'official contact' was also appointed, Abraham Kuyt, who went around the country visiting isolated Jewish households and individuals. He tried to encourage them to develop a religious life, handed out free copies of the *NIW*, tried to persuade parents to circumcise their sons, and brought kosher meat upon request.⁴⁶

These two initiatives fitted seamlessly into the NIK's general policy of centralization. Many local Jewish congregations were disbanded—the lower limit for a viable community was ten men who had reached the age of majority under Jewish law. The remaining assets and revenue from the sale of synagogues and other inventory went into a Central Fund (Centraal Fonds). The supervision of the Jewish cemeteries of disbanded congregations became the responsibility of the NIK. Jewish life was clustered mainly in the largest provincial towns and the western conurbation known as the Randstad. When NIK by-laws were revised in 1952, becoming more centralistic, largely thanks to the work of the legal expert Professor Izaak Kisch, there were still fifty-eight Jewish congregations. 47 Fruitless attempts were made to sweep away the pre-war framework of regions (ressorten) completely, but it did prove possible to forge cooperative ties between the regions in the northern, eastern, and southern provinces—roughly the entire country outside North and South Holland-under the Chief Rabbinate in Utrecht. In 1956 these regions appointed Elieser Berlinger, originally German, as their chief rabbi. Until 1985 Berlinger travelled from town to town and village to village to assist small Jewish congregations, encourage emigration (since he was a staunch Zionist), and make sure that the disbanding of congregations was handled properly.

Jewish congregations chose to expand their range of offerings, organizing not only synagogue services and other religious gatherings but also cultural activities. This was the continuation of a development that had begun in wartime, when the exclusion of Jews from cultural life had led to the formation of 'cultural committees' (*culturele commissies*) responsible for providing Jewish cultural activities. These cultural committees reappeared, with the mission of reaching Jews who had lost touch with Judaism and reconnecting them to the community. Lectures and slideshows about Israel were sometimes successful ways of reaching the *reḥokim* ('far ones'). That was the goal of many Jewish activities in the 1950s and 1960s: to integrate 'estranged' Jews into community life and expose them to religious and Zionist life through theatrical performances, dances, festivals, slideshows about Israel, or Jewish car rallies.

Israel and Zionism

The foundation of the State of Israel in 1948 was, along with the response to the Holocaust, among the events with the greatest impact on Dutch Jews after the Second

Wallet, 'Om "een uitgeteekenden joodsche levensweg".

⁴⁷ M. Berman, 'Herstel en verlies: De reconstructie van het Nederlands Israëlitisch Kerkgenootschap' (doctoral thesis, Nieuwe en Nieuwste Geschiedenis, University of Amsterdam, 1995).

World War. From as early as 1945 there was widespread sympathy for the Zionist cause, a sentiment that was dominant on most of the community's administrative boards and in the Jewish press—especially the *NIW*. Along the road to independence, the Haganah initiative raised funds for the Yishuv—the Jewish community in Mandate Palestine—so that they could arm themselves. The declaration of the establishment of the State of Israel on 14 May 1948 was cause for a great celebration in Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, with prominent speakers, contributions from Jewish youth movements, and Israeli music and dance.

There was deep sympathy for the Jewish state not only among Jews, but in Dutch society more generally. Even so, the Netherlands did not recognize Israel until relatively late—de facto in 1949 and de jure in 1950. That had to do with the colonial war in which the Netherlands was embroiled in Indonesia. Various efforts were being made to hold the motherland and the colonies together, and it was thought that recognition of Israel might be objectionable to the Indonesian population, which was mostly Muslim. It was not until the Netherlands had lost the former Dutch East Indies beyond recovery that the country took the step of recognizing Israel. In the period leading up to that decision, some social groups, mainly on the political left—with the Labour Party (Partij van de Arbeid; PvdA) and University of Amsterdam leading the way—agitated for prompt recognition. This stance was supported by the Jewish community. 48

Recognition of Israel was followed by diplomatic relations. At first, there was an Israeli representative to the entire Benelux, stationed in Brussels, Dr Michael Amir. He was only later assigned specifically to the Netherlands. Alongside the embassy in The Hague, there was also a consulate in Amsterdam. It was located in the Johannes Vermeerstraat, where many other Zionist organizations also had their offices: Hachsjarah & Alijah, the Jewish Agency, the Jewish National Fund, the NZB, and the Collectieve Israel Actie. This gave the street a distinctly Jewish character, which it retained until around 1995. 49 The embassy and consulate had to establish a place for themselves in the Dutch Jewish community. Their diplomatic and political function was clear: to represent the State of Israel in the Dutch political and social realm. But what was the role of the embassy and ambassador in relation to the Jewish community? It took more than a little time and effort to find a new balance. The NZB, which until then had politically represented the Jewish community in Palestine, had to redefine its role and purpose. Other Jewish organizations also developed close ties to the embassy, in the conviction that Israel and the diaspora Jews were working for the same cause. The first ambassador, Michael Amir, focused primarily on the diplomatic world and was in contact with only a select subgroup of Dutch Jewish leaders. He regarded himself as a representative of all Jews, including those in the Netherlands, an attitude that led to

⁴⁸ R. B. Soetendorp, Pragmatisch of principieel: Het Nederlandse beleid ten aanzien van het Arabisch-Israëlisch conflict (Leiden, 1983), 33–55.

⁴⁹ G. C. Cohen, Het Joods Nationaal Fonds in Nederland (Amsterdam, 1995).

serious clashes.⁵⁰ Not until 1958 was a new balance achieved, under one of his successors, Hanan Cidor (Hans Citroen). From that time on, the embassy's main task was to represent Israel in the political sphere and the Dutch Jewish community was primarily responsible for internal and Dutch matters.

While before the war, the 'general Zionists' (algemene zionisten)—who were classical liberals—had largely set the tone in the NZB, it was now the socialist Zionists—whose organization was called Po'alei Zion—who were dominant. That was partly due to the success of the Labour Party in Israel under David Ben-Gurion's leadership. The NZB published a magazine, De Joodse Wachter ('The Jewish Guardian'), and had a tradition of holding its conferences during the Christmas holidays. Those gatherings were a forum for intense and fundamental discussion of the nature of Zionism after 1948. Now that a Jewish state had been established, wasn't it time to wind down the Zionist movement? After all, it had achieved its goal, and anyone who wished could emigrate to Israel. Nevertheless, the final decision was to keep the NZB in operation, mainly for the purposes of encouraging Dutch Jews to emigrate to Israel, supporting the Israeli cause in the Dutch public domain, and taking political steps towards the freedom for all Jews worldwide to emigrate to Israel. That last area of activity grew in importance over time; in the 1950s, the focus was on Jews both in Arab countries and in the communist Soviet Union and eastern Europe.⁵¹

From 1949 onwards, the NZB, to the frustration of its leaders, coexisted with the Dutch branch of the international Zionist women's movement WIZO. The NZB felt the Netherlands was too small for a separate women's organization, but the WIZO soon won a place for itself by offering financial and material support and organizing initiatives. For students, the pre-war Nederlandse Zionistische Studenten Organisatie (Dutch Zionist Student Organization; NZSO) was restored to life, and until 1975 it played a major role in shaping the ideological outlook of young Jews. Within the Zionist movement, young people were called on either to emigrate to Israel right away, or to remain in the Netherlands but choose a course of study that would be useful later when they settled in the Jewish state. For example, Zionist students had a strong preference for the technical and agricultural universities in Delft and Wageningen respectively.

Many NZSO students had grown up with the Jewish youth organizations. These groups played an especially central role in the post-war period. First, in 1945, the prewar Joodse Jeugdfederatie (Jewish Youth Federation; JJF) was re-established, and young Jews throughout the country became members. The early stage of this reconstruction

⁵⁰ B. Wallet, "Een levend gedenkteken": Israël, joods Nederland en de herinnering aan de Sjoa', in F. van Vree, H. Berg, and D. Duindam (eds.), *De Hollandsche Schouwburg: Theater, deportatieplaats, plek van herinnering* (Amsterdam, 2013), 190–9.

⁵¹ H. Boas, 'De Nederlandse Zionistenbond na de bevrijding', in F. Püttmann et al. (eds.), *Markante Nederlandse zionisten* (Amsterdam, 1996), 108–12.

process received robust support from the Jewish Brigade, the Jewish soldiers from Palestine in the British army, who were stationed in the Netherlands in 1945-6. They gave Hebrew lessons, told stories about life in Palestine, and taught young people to dance. There were also shelichim, emissaries sent from Palestine to help to lead the revitalization of the Jewish youth movement. The JJF grew at a furious pace but was unable to maintain unity between Mizrachi (Orthodox) and socialist youth groups. The Orthodox youth groups split off under the name of Bne Akiwa, and the socialists became Habonim. From the start, both were integrated into the worldwide Jewish youth movements that found their centre in the State of Israel. The shelichim continued to play an important role, providing an Israeli atmosphere and knowledge of the country. The Orthodox, non-Zionist Hasjalsjelet organization and the emphatically secular, left-wing Hashomer Hatzair also received Israeli emissaries of this kind. The goal of these youth organizations, which reached hundreds of young people, was to raise them in the Jewish and Zionist traditions and encourage emigration to Israel. In Amsterdam, the NIHS set up the children's organization Tikwatenoe, which remained impartial and therefore non-Zionist, but was nonetheless—like almost all Jewish organizations—frankly pro-Israel.⁵²

Preparing for possible emigration to Israel involved learning Hebrew. A special organization, Tarboetressort, sought to meet this need, organizing modern Hebrew courses across the country. Modern Hebrew also became an important part of the 'Jewish lessons' offered by Jewish communities and in the two schools offering Jewish private education (Joods Bijzonder Onderwijs): the primary school Rosj Pina and the Jewish modern grammar school (*hogereburgerschool*; HBS). This led to new problems in the Orthodox congregations, because the traditional western Ashkenazi pronunciation of Hebrew was used in Ashkenazi synagogues. Children who learned the Israeli pronunciation in Jewish schools, Jewish lessons, and Jewish youth organizations wanted to use it in synagogue too. The rabbis and chief rabbis saw themselves as guardians of the minhag, the local religious customs, including the traditional pronunciation. Boys who wanted to use the Israeli pronunciation at their barmitzvahs had great difficulty obtaining permission. But the synagogue in Bussum made the switch as early as 1945, and this Zionist reform was gradually adopted by Jewish congregations, especially the smaller ones.

The dominance of Zionism placed Chief Rabbi Justus Tal in Amsterdam in an especially delicate position. He remained loyal to his pre-war Agudist views; while he accepted the reality of the State of Israel, he was sharply critical of its secular nature. He also refused to allow the adoption of Zionist elements in the Amsterdam synagogue services, despite great demand. For example, he would not allow the Israeli anthem, Hatikvah, to be sung in the synagogue. He had no choice but to lend his

⁵² Joël Serphos, *Nehije koelanoe chaloetsiem. Haboniem 60 jaar* (Amsterdam, 2010); Wallet, Van Trigt, and Polak, *Die ons heeft laten leven*, 192–200.

approval to the celebration of the Israeli day of independence, Yom Ha'atzmaut—partly because his fellow rabbis were Zionists—but he insisted on giving a critical speech as a standard part of the programme. The Chief Rabbinate for the Netherlands decided, after long discussion, to include the official Prayer for the State of Israel, instituted by the chief rabbis in Israel, in the Dutch liturgy, in combination with the prayer for the House of Orange (*Hanoten teshuah*). But they left out three words that accorded religious significance to the state. After Tal's death in 1954, appointing a Zionist chief rabbi was regarded as a matter of the utmost importance, both in Amsterdam and elsewhere in the country. Aron Schuster was chosen and would remain in that office until 1969; in his halakhic decisions, he hewed very closely to those of the Chief Rabbinate of Israel.⁵³

Religion

One noteworthy development in this period was the rise of organized Reform Judaism. The movement had begun in 1929, but few Dutch Jews had been drawn to its rationalistic approach, in which German Jews set the tone. Most remained within the Orthodox NIK 'unified congregations' (eenheidsgemeenten) to which nearly all Dutch Jews belonged, regardless of their degree of religiosity. But starting in 1954, under the influence of a new Dutch rabbi, the charismatic Jacob Soetendorp, the Reform Jewish Congregation in Amsterdam grew into an attractive, up-to-date alternative. Soetendorp departed from the old German Jewish tradition by taking Progessive congregations in Great Britain and the United States as models in many respects. He believed a 'Jewish renaissance' was in progress that would make Judaism socially relevant once more—an optimistic view with broad appeal. His profound engagement with politics, culture, and Jewish–Christian dialogue drew a new, younger generation into the LJG.⁵⁴

The sunny Reform view of Jewish–Christian dialogue was related to a fierce and caustic debate between Orthodox and Reform rabbis about the future of the Jewish Netherlands. The Orthodox chief rabbis Schuster and Berlinger expected that those with a strong sense of Jewish identity would soon emigrate to Israel, so it seemed unimportant to them to put effort into improving conditions in the diaspora. They perceived Israel as central and saw no need whatsoever for dialogue. Although Soetendorp was an enthusiastic Zionist, he arrived at a different point of view. More and more, it seemed to him that there would always be a large diaspora community alongside Israel. The opening of a new, modern synagogue next to the RAI convention centre in 1966 was intended to symbolize that outlook: a conviction that Jewish life in the

⁵³ Wallet, Van Trigt, and Polak, *Die ons heeft laten leven*, 102–17.

⁵⁴ J. Soetendorp, *De wereld van het optimisme: Het Jodendom in wezen en verschijning* (Bussum, 1970); Wallet, 'Om "een uitgeteekenden joodsche levensweg'".

⁵⁵ The following paragraphs are based on B. Wallet, 'Het "joodse gelijk" en de "niet geboete schuld": Nederlands-joodse ambivalentie rond het Tweede Vaticaans Concilie', *Trajecta*, 22 (2013), 103–28.

Netherlands did have a future, and that Jewish–Christian dialogue would create a positive climate in which Jews could live in peace.

For the Jewish communities in the Netherlands, the Second Vatican Council (1962-5) of the Roman Catholic Church was a decisive moment for establishing their position on the emerging Jewish-Christian dialogue. Interest in such dialogue had been growing among Christians since 1945, but Dutch Jews, with the exception of Soetendorp, had not yet taken a firm position. Around the time of the Council, the discussion gained momentum, with both Orthodox and Reform camps staking out their positions. For the most part, the Orthodox camp settled on an attitude of disengagement, and sometimes outright rejection. The repositioning of Christianity and determination of a Christian theological position towards Judaism struck Orthodox rabbis as a purely Christian affair. They saw absolutely no reason to take an active part in the process of reflection within Christianity, whether at the Council or in Dutch churches. The Orthodox camp also rejected dialogue for reasons of principle, reasoning that anyone who truly believed in the teachings of their own religion had nothing to gain from such a conversation. The most to which they were willing to commit was a discussion for the pragmatic purpose of correcting factual misconceptions, mainly among Christians and about Jews.

In contrast, Dutch Reform Jews became zealous advocates of Jewish–Christian dialogue. Soetendorp travelled the country giving evening lectures to Christian audiences about Judaism and Israel. He did so from an optimistic historical perspective, interpreting the post-war period as a new era in which age-old conflicts would be laid to rest and a new, peaceful mode of coexistence would be found. Soetendorp was disappointed with the final outcome of the Council, especially the absence of an explicit admission of guilt in the declaration *Nostra Aetate*, but he remained committed to dialogue. Along with progressive Catholics and Protestants, he went on working towards closer relations.

If Reform Judaism was a movement of religious renewal, so were various currents within Orthodoxy. The traditional Dutch Agudists had to accept that even their own children were out to renew and deepen their experience of Judaism. From the 1950s onwards, increasing numbers of Orthodox secondary school graduates spent time at a yeshiva (institute for advanced Talmud study) outside the Netherlands, while girls often visited a Bais Yaakov school (religious girls' school). Some went to Israel, where the yeshiva Kol Torah in Jerusalem was especially popular, and others to Gateshead, London, Montreux, or Wilrijk (Antwerp). Their intention was to obtain a deeper understanding of the Jewish tradition than the Jewish educational system in the Netherlands could offer them. The yeshivas attended by the boys had an eastern European Jewish character and exposed them to other traditions and customs. On their return to the Netherlands, this was a source of friction. From this international eastern European

⁵⁶ The following paragraphs draw on Wallet, 'Een familie van gemeenschappen', 148–50.

Jewish perspective, Dutch customs were often seen as permissive. For example, there was a demand among returning yeshiva students for milk processed under continual rabbinical supervision (<code>halav yisra'el</code>), a departure from the Dutch custom of drinking ordinary milk. This international form of Orthodoxy was very attractive to certain young people, including some from secular Jewish backgrounds. So from the 1970s onwards there were several hundred <code>hozerim beteshuvah</code> in the Netherlands, secular Jews who 'returned' to an Orthodox lifestyle.⁵⁷

One direct result of these visits to yeshivas abroad was the introduction of Chabad in the Netherlands. This hasidic movement surrounding Rebbe Menachem Mendel Schneerson, who died in 1991, evolved into a successful Jewish missionary movement in the post-war period. Through a combination of firm Orthodox positions, the use of modern media, and inventive missionary campaigns, Chabad—also known as Lubavitch hasidism—expanded its sphere of influence. In the Netherlands, the movement started small in the early 1960s, but soon augmented its impact through its contributions to Jewish life, especially in smaller Jewish congregations. From the 1970s onwards, Chabad played a growing role in the rabbinate. Both Dutch and foreign followers of the movement became rabbis in the Netherlands, particularly in the smaller congregations where Orthodox Jewish life required many sacrifices. The majority of Orthodox rabbis in the Netherlands are now associated with Chabad.

Culture of Remembrance

The liberation of the Netherlands on 5 May 1945 was the first opportunity for the Dutch to display their grief in public. Many of their compatriots had died in the war. So without delay, the search began for a fitting way to commemorate them. In early 1946 the cabinet decided that from then on 5 May would be the national memorial day. The day was to begin with the remembrance of the dead and then become a celebration of freedom regained. After strong protest by former resistance members, a separate day was reserved for remembrance: 4 May, one day earlier. ⁵⁸

Remembrance ceremonies in the years immediately following the war, up to the early 1960s, revolved around the resistance. Speeches tended to emphasize the heroic

- ⁵⁷ M. E. Mock, *The Dynamics of Becoming Orthodox: Dutch Jewish Women Returning to Judaism and How their Mothers Felt about It* (Amsterdam, 2009); ead., "En op het moment dat ik koos ben ik dus meteen het orthodoxe pad gaan bewandelen": Nieuwe religieuze identificatie met het orthodoxe jodendom in Nederland', in Berg and Wallet (eds.), *Wie niet weg is, is gezien*, 207–20. For the international context, see M. H. Danzger, *Returning to Tradition: The Contemporary Revival of Orthodox Judaism* (New Haven, 1989).
- ⁵⁸ For the development of the culture of memory from 1945 onwards, see in particular J. C. H. Blom, 'De oorlog na de oorlog', in id., In de ban van goed en fout: Geschiedschrijving over de bezettingstijd in Nederland (Amsterdam, 2007), 121–31; I. de Haan, Na de ondergang: De herinnering aan de Jodenvervolging in Nederland 1945–1995 (The Hague, 1997); F. van Vree, In de schaduw van Auschwitz: Herinneringen, beelden, geschiedenis (Groningen, 1995); F. van Vree and R. van der Laarse (eds.), De dynamiek van de herinnering: Nederland en de Tweede Wereldoorlog in internationaalperspectief (Amsterdam, 2009).

courage of the resistance fighters in their struggle against the occupiers and thank them for their role in the liberation of the Netherlands. The Dutch Jews went almost unmentioned. In 1954, when Amsterdam's chief rabbi, Justus Tal, called attention to Jewish wartime suffering in a speech at the official ceremony in the Ridderzaal in The Hague, the national newspaper *De Telegraaf* commented that it was 'often and all too readily forgotten'. The idea in the early post-war period was that there was a unified Dutch people that had suffered collectively. Some people had been through the bombing of Rotterdam, others had done forced labour for the Germans, and the Jews had been taken away to eastern Europe. But it was seen as wrong to emphasize the different groups in Dutch society; all had suffered, and it was time for them all to rebuild the country together. That was why there was one remembrance day for everyone, on 4 May. The country took great pride in the heroes of the resistance, who represented the Dutch fighting spirit that ultimately prevailed over adversity on 5 May 1945. The country took great pride in the heroes of the resistance, who represented the Dutch fighting spirit that ultimately prevailed over adversity on 5 May 1945.

This perspective suppressed the wartime experiences of Jews. So Dutch Jews decided to organize their own memorial ceremonies on 4 May. In 1955 the Reform rabbi Jacob Soetendorp expressed what many Dutch Jews had been thinking: 'In our suffering, we are unified [with the Dutch people]; in commemorating those because of whom we suffer, we are separate.' This explains why many Jews stayed away from the general remembrance ceremonies focusing on the resistance. 'What better place for us to commemorate our fallen than within the walls of our synagogues?' The same national attitude that dominated the discourse on 4 May was also visible in relation to monuments. Jews had little or no opportunity to establish monuments to their community's dead in the public domain, in squares or on the streets. Most of the monuments in central locations—such as Dam Square in Amsterdam—were dedicated to all the victims. But the Jewish community wanted to commemorate their own dead specifically, so they erected monuments on private property, in synagogues, and in Jewish cemeteries. These were often unveiled on 4 May, with a group recitation of the prayer for the dead, the Kaddish.⁶⁰

A few monuments were linked to the fate of the Jews in the Second World War, but in such a way as to underscore the dominant culture of remembrance. The foremost example is the Monument of Jewish Gratitude by the sculptor Jobs Wertheim, unveiled in Weesperplein, Amsterdam, in 1950. This monument was an initiative of a group of Jewish individuals. Jewish organizations refused to participate, because they did not support the idea behind the monument: namely, to express the gratitude of the Jews to the Dutch people for their help and support during the war years. This collective

⁵⁹ Bossenbroek, De Meelstreep, 287–363.

⁶⁰ R. van Ginkel, *Rondom de stilte: Herdenkingscultuur in Nederland* (Amsterdam, 2011); F. van Vree, 'Iedere dag en elk uur: De jodenvervolging en de dynamiek van de herinnering in Nederland', in Berg and Wallet (eds.), *Wie niet weg is, is gezien*, 57–72; Wallet, Van Trigt, and Polak, *Die ons heeft laten leven*, 86–8.

approach was repellent to the Jewish community, with the memory still fresh in their minds of how some Dutch people had assisted in the deportation of the Jews. The main reason that a committee of Jews nevertheless took the initiative was to express their thanks to those who risked their lives by offering hiding places. The committee perceived the monument as their ticket back into Dutch society, because it expressed their confidence in the Dutch population and endorsed the national myth of resistance. The monument was a way for the committee members, most of whom were well integrated, to underscore their renewed dedication to Dutch society. Most Jewish organizations chose not to attend the official unveiling of the monument.

Another sculpture was placed between the Portuguese Synagogue (Esnoga) and the Ashkenazi synagogue complex in 1952: Mari Andriessen's The Dockworker. It was in the exact spot where the Jewish community had planned its own monument after 1945, a monument it had not been permitted to build. The Dockworker once again symbolized how the people of Amsterdam had assisted their Jewish fellow citizens; the sculpture portrayed the dauntless workers who had gone on strike in protest after the round-ups began. This February Strike of 1941 had been the only collective protest by the population of a Nazi-occupied European country. Although the Jewish community recognized the uniqueness of the strike and was glad to see a monument dedicated to it, the location raised hackles. But when they heard that Queen Juliana was to unveil the monument, they swallowed their objections and attended the ceremony after all. But later commemorations of the February Strike around The Dockworker did not win the same general acceptance. Instead, they became entangled in political battles. The Communistische Partij Nederland (Dutch Communist Party; CPN), which had been the main force behind the strike, organized the ceremonies; with the Cold War in full swing, the effect was to politicize them. This led some members of the Jewish community, and of the general population, not to attend the annual commemoration. Sometimes there were even confrontations: in 1972, for example, when Mayor Ivo Samkalden had a communist flag thrown onto his back as he was laying a wreath at the sculpture.61

Another slow, painful debate related to the future of the Hollandsche Schouwburg, the former theatre used by the occupying regime as a holding and deportation centre. At first, there were plans to use it as a theatre again, but a quickly formed committee of prominent Jews and non-Jews in Amsterdam protested strenuously. The building was purchased from the owners, but finding a suitable purpose for it was not easy. Many Jews had no desire to return to that place of misery and wanted to see it demolished. Others favoured turning it into a memorial site. The city authorities tried to break the

⁶¹ S. Legêne, 'Dans van een dokwerker: Standbeeld en geschiedbeeld van de Februaristaking', in H. M. Beliën and M. H. van Hoogstraten (eds.), Herinnering en historische visies: De betekenis van vijfenvijftig jaar Februaristaking in Amsterdam (Amsterdam, 1996), 36–62; A. Mooij, De strijd om de Februaristaking (Amsterdam, 2006).

impasse by offering the building to the State of Israel for the establishment of an Israeli cultural centre, but this effort was a resounding failure and led to a heated confrontation between Dutch Jews and the Israeli ambassador Dr Michael Amir. In 1958 a decision was finally made to designate the building as a place of remembrance. Part of it was demolished, and behind the facade, a monument was erected, along with a *chapelle ardente* holding an eternal flame. From its opening in 1962, the Hollandsche Schouwburg developed into the primary location for Dutch Jews to commemorate their war dead.⁶²

Antisemitism and the Cold War

Political antisemitism was a lost cause in the Netherlands of the reconstruction period; every right-thinking Dutch citizen was expressly opposed to it. But social antisemitism was far from extinct. Pre-war antisemitic traditions, known in pre-1940 Jewish circles as *risjes* (from the Yiddish), lived on: obnoxious remarks and unpleasant treatment, but fortunately without any social or political consequences. This behaviour had intensified relative to the pre-war period; the broad scholarly consensus now is that this intensification was a lingering effect of wartime Nazi propaganda. Examples include remarks such as 'the best Jews were murdered', 'the Jews are stealing the best jobs again', and 'they already have lots of money again'. The stereotypical Jew ('het joodje') is also found in Dutch literature of the period, even in the work of such widely read and respected authors as Simon Vestdijk, Louis Ferron, Klaas Norel, and Johan Kievit. 63

In the Jewish community, there was an animated debate about how to respond to this antisemitism. The position that carried the day was that of the Zionist movement, which had become much more influential in the post-war Dutch Jewish community. Zionists saw antisemitism as a problem, or even an illness, of non-Jews, for which they themselves were responsible. It was their job to find a solution. To Zionists, antisemitism was an objectionable but unavoidable part of life in galut, the diaspora. For Jews to become involved in battling it was, as they saw it, hopeless and pointless. Instead, they had to learn the most important lesson of antisemitism and make aliyah, emigrate to Israel. ⁶⁴

The onset of the Cold War brought about the politicization of antisemitism. Once again, it was clearly identifiable—this time, in the Soviet Union and eastern Europe.

⁶² F. van Vree, H. Berg and D. Duindam (eds.), *De Hollandsche Schouwburg: Theater, deportatieplaats, plek van herinnering* (Amsterdam, 2013), 162–217; D. Duindam, 'Signs of the Shoah. The Hollandsche Schouwburg as a Site of Memory' (doctoral thesis, University of Amsterdam, 2016).

⁶³ D. Hondius, *Terugkeer: Antisemitisme in Nederland rond de bevrijding* (The Hague, 1998), and E. Gans, "Vandaag hebben ze niets, maar morgen bezitten ze weer tien gulden": Antisemitische stereotypen in bevrijd Nederland', in Kristel (ed.), *Polderschouw*, 313–53; Lipschits, *De kleine Sjoa*; J. Melkman, *Geliefde vijand: Het beeld van de Jood in de naoorlogse Nederlandse literatuur* (Amsterdam, 1964).

⁶⁴ E. Gans, 'Jewish Responses to Post-Liberation Antisemitism', in R. Ensel and E. Gans (eds.), *The Holocaust, Israel and 'the Jew': Histories of Antisemitism in Post-War Dutch Society* (Amsterdam, 2016), 127–49.

In Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union, show trials of Jewish communists and intellectuals were held in 1952; they were said to be untrustworthy because they were more loyal to each other than to the proletariat. They were also denounced for their supposed links to Zionism and Israel—often non-existent. This turned many Jews in the Netherlands against communism; the belief was that *they* were antisemitic, while *we* in the West were not. The critical Jewish social democrat Jacques de Kadt was among those who analysed the situation in this way, and he envisaged the mirror image of the situation in the Eastern Bloc: a close alliance between Jews, the West, and the State of Israel. This analysis was broadly accepted in Dutch society, especially after the Arab–Israeli War of 1967.⁶⁵

The Stalinist show trials also had repercussions in the CPN, which had enjoyed a stable support base in the Jewish community before the war and had won still greater sympathy thanks to its role in the wartime resistance. Benjamin Sally (Ben) Polak, who in 1946 became the country's second communist alderman (*wethouder*) in Amsterdam and a member of the provincial legislature (Provinciale Staten) of North Holland, was expelled from the party in 1953 for having the audacity to speculate about the anti-Jewish motives behind the show trials. When de-Stalinization took hold in the Soviet Union and therefore in the CPN as well, Polak was reinstated as a member, and in 1956 the party even appointed him to the Dutch Senate (Eerste Kamer). 66

The Cold War did forge new ties between Jews, the 'West', and Israel but also created new problems. The division of Europe into East and West created great political pressure to bring West Germany swiftly into the fold. The country was meant to serve as a buffer against the communist threat, by becoming an integral part of the NATO military alliance. In order to normalize relations with West Germany, the Netherlands, like other Western countries, sought to resolve the question of German war criminals and collaborators as quickly as possible. Pardons were dispensed on a large scale, and German prisoners of war were sent back to the Federal Republic of Germany. On top of that, the Jewish denominations received the same letter from the Dutch government as the Christian ones, calling on them to accept foute Nederlanders ('wrong' Dutch people, a term for Nazi sympathizers) back into society with 'Christian charity'. The Jewish community was unhappy with both the wording and the timing of the letter. Besides this issue, there was also a difficult decision to be made: one of the preliminary conditions for recognizing West Germany as a fully-fledged political actor was that the country offer a form of Wiedergutmachung (reparations). The six million murdered Jews were initially represented by the State of Israel, later joined by

⁶⁵ For the impact of the Cold War on the reconstruction of Jewish life in Western Europe, see Weinberg, *Recovering a Voice*, 238–85. For Jacques de Kadt, see R. Havenaar, *De tocht naar het onbekende: Het politieke denken van Jacques de Kadt* (Amsterdam, 1990).

⁶⁶ J. Divendal, A. Koper, and M. van Weezel, *De moeizame destalinisatie van de CPN : Documentatie over het conflict tussen de CPN en de Bruggroep, toen en nu* (Amsterdam, 1982), 163, 227.

'diaspora organizations'. Since the negotiations took place in Wassenaar, a town near The Hague, the Dutch Jews were relatively close to the action. One result of these talks was two programmes of financial compensation for Holocaust survivors: the *Bundesentschädigungsgesetz* (1953) and *Bundesrückerstattungsgesetz* (1957). In 1958 the Jewish organizations in the Netherlands established the Jokos foundation to handle the administration and disbursement of reparations. There were different views about accepting this money from the Germans. The political motives were hard to stomach, but some felt that this was at least partial compensation for what had been stolen from them.

Jews in the Multicultural Netherlands

Social Position

From the 1960s onwards, the position of Jews in the Netherlands changed radically. This was the result of several social trends that interacted and reinforced each other. First of all, Dutch society was altered by the arrival of new minority groups. The decolonization of the Dutch East Indies (in 1950) followed by Surinam (in 1975) led to the formation of large ethnic and cultural minorities. Another contributing factor was labour migration from Mediterranean countries—mainly Italy and Spain at first, and later Turkey and Morocco. With the rapid growth of these groups in the 1970s as a result of family reunification, it gradually became clear that Dutch society was changing in character. For Jews, the main significance of this development was that they were no longer the single stereotypical, proverbial minority, but one minority among many.

Secondly, the Netherlands underwent a cultural revolution in this period, largely parallel to comparable developments in the United States, Germany, France, and Great Britain. This revolution was marked by the struggle for greater democratization and social equality, outspoken activism for the impoverished and oppressed elsewhere in the world, and changing sexual mores. In the Dutch context, this partly took the form of a sharp rejection of the system of social segregation known as 'pillarization' (*verzuiling*). This change of mood found expression both in new political and cultural movements such as the D66 and PPR parties and, at the same time, in the transformation of the social 'pillars' from tight-knit, demanding communities into 'thin' or 'light' communities.⁶⁷ The role of religion in society became controversial, and affiliation with religious communities went into decline. The two social processes of secularization and 'depillarization' (*ontzuiling*) reinforced each other to some extent, although they certainly never merged and should therefore be carefully distinguished from each other.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ P. van Dam, Staat van verzuiling: Over een Nederlandse mythe (Amsterdam, 2011).

⁶⁸ For developments in the 1960s, see e.g. H. W. von der Dunk, 'Tussen welvaart en onrust: Nederland van 1955 tot 1973', in id. (ed.), Wederopbouw, welvaart en onrust: Nederland in de jaren vijftig en zestig (Houten, 1986), 9–35; J. Kennedy, Nieuw Babylon in aanbouw: Nederland in de jaren zestig (Amsterdam, 1995); H. Righart, De eindeloze jaren zestig: Geschiedenis van een generatieconflict (Amsterdam, 1995).

One outcome of this cultural revolution was that 'general Christian' (algemeenchristelijk) public morality, which had often been implicitly assumed, no longer enjoyed broad support. There were demands for a new, binding moral framework, which was found in a third major development that took place in the 1960s: a shift in the culture of remembrance of the Second World War. While until then the national discourse had been centred on the heroes of the resistance, who were taken to be exemplary of the Netherlands as a nation of resistance, that image began to change for various reasons. The Eichmann trial in Israel in 1961 was covered in detail in the Dutch media. Besides the spectacular capture of the Nazi leader in Argentina, it was above all the thorough proceedings that drew renewed attention to the Holocaust. Commentators on the proceedings in the Dutch press included the authors Harry Mulisch (for the weekly news magazine Elseviers Weekblad) and Abel Herzberg (for the national daily Trouw), who had a sharp eye for philosophical issues of good versus evil and perpetrator versus victim. Meanwhile—on the new medium of television, which was swiftly gaining in popularity and having a strong social impact—the director of the Rijksinstituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie (National Institute for War Documentation; RIOD), Loe de Jong, reconstructed the war in the series De Bezetting with the help of films and photographs. Considerable emphasis was placed on the persecution of the Jews. This was reinforced, lastly, by the publication of the chronicle Ondergang (English title: Ashes in the Wind) by the Amsterdam historian Jacques Presser. The presentation of this book at the Hollandsche Schouwburg, the central Jewish 'place of remembrance', made a strong impression and, together with the book itself, left a deep mark on public and political debate.⁶⁹ Consequently, the focal point of commemoration shifted gradually to the victims of the war—and primarily to the Jews. More and more—especially in the context of education, public debate, and commemoration—the persecution of the Jews became the central narrative of the Second World War. 70

The moral questions raised by the Holocaust gave rise to a new, widely accepted public morality, and the Second World War became the ultimate frame of reference for political and ethical questions of good and evil. 'Auschwitz—never again!' became a guiding moral principle in countless areas of ethics and of domestic and foreign policy. The struggle against totalitarianism, the oppression of minorities, and social inequality went on against the background of the Holocaust. In Parliament and the media, politicians and opinion leaders regularly invoked the persecution of the Jews in support of their own visions of society. This new public morality, in which the Second World War was the measure of good and evil, replaced the 'general Christian' morality that had formed the shared discourse of 'pillarized' society.⁷¹

⁶⁹ J. Presser, Ondergang: De vervolging en verdelging van het Nederlandse jodendom 1940–1945, 2 vols. (The Hague, 1965).
⁷⁰ De Haan, Na de ondergang.

⁷¹ J. Oegema, Een vreemd geluk: De publieke religie rond Auschwitz (Amsterdam, 2003).

The combined effect of all these developments was to shift the Jewish community from the margins, where they had found themselves in the 1950s, to the heart of society. The small, recently rebuilt community became the centre of attention. There was much greater openness to Jewish experiences in the war years, and in the culture of remembrance, Jews gained access to the public domain for the first time. Around 4 May, they were in demand as speakers, but that was by no means where their new social role ended. They were assigned the role of moral conscience because their sheer presence brought the moral issues of the war period to the fore. 'Public Jews' gained an authoritative voice in broad social debates. The Reform rabbis Jacob and Awraham Soetendorp (father and son) were cut out for this role; from the Vietnam War to the food crisis in the Third World, they presented a distinctive Jewish perspective. The author Abel Herzberg also assumed an influential role, at a time when his critical, independent point of view had lost him a great deal of support in his own Jewish community. The leading Jewish media outlet, the *NIW*, transformed from a weekly for the community to a widely read, authoritative magazine.⁷²

The Jewish community had not sought out this new, central place in society, and at least some of its traditional leaders were caught by surprise. The Orthodox rabbis and chief rabbis and the administrators of the NIK, who still regarded themselves as speaking for the entire community, saw their position undermined by new Jewish opinion leaders who were independent, unaffiliated, or Reform. Yet the controversial stance of Jewish leaders on the marriage of Princess Beatrix and Prince Claus in 1966 had already led to a major break with tradition. Before then, Jewish administrators had always striven for close relations with the authorities. There had been complaints within the community about its marginal position, but the outside world had generally remained unaware of the criticism. In 1965, when the royal couple became engaged, and in 1966 it was a different story. The dictates of the new public morality led to Jews being assigned an unsought central role in the public debate about the royal pair. Was the German diplomat Claus von Amsberg, who had served in the Wehrmacht in the Second World War, an acceptable spouse for the heir to the Dutch throne? Both camps tried to win the support of the Jewish community in order to gain the moral advantage in the debate. The day before the parliamentary debate on the legislation permitting the marriage, administrators and rabbis met with the couple and frankly expressed their emotions and criticism as Jews. The outcome was that the Jewish community decided not to participate in the festivities. This controversy not only clearly demonstrated the central role of the Jews in Dutch society, but also represented the

⁷² Kuiper, *Een wijze ging worbij*; Wallet, 'Geweten van de samenleving 1945–2015'. Joel Fishman identifies Chief Rabbi Aron Schuster's speech for the tenth anniversary of the liberation of the Netherlands in the Nieuwe Kerk in Amsterdam as a turning point in the relationship between the Jewish community and the public authorities; see his article 'Een keerpunt in de naoorlogse geschiedenis van de Nederlandse joden: De toespraak van opperrabbijn Schuster in de Nieuwe Kerk (1955)', in Berg and Wallet (eds.), *Wie niet weg is, is gezien*, 119–29.

Jewish community's first departure from its strong tradition of loyalty to the Dutch authorities.⁷³

Multiculturalism

The new public morality also implied an alternative vision of society. One perceived lesson of the Second World War was that minorities should be given the freedom and opportunity to maintain and develop their own identities. That applied not only to the Jewish community, but also, by extension, to all the new minority groups that had formed. It was felt that the 'pillarized society' had to make way for a 'multicultural society' with a variety of ethnic and cultural minorities, each of which would have the freedom to develop in accordance with its own normative beliefs. From this perspective, minority groups were encouraged to maintain their cultural identities, which were seen as enriching a diverse, tolerant Dutch society. In a sense, the new multicultural model was a continuation of important elements of pillarization: the acceptance of diversity and of a role for the public authorities in guaranteeing equal rights and opportunities for different groups. In the 1970s and 1980s, multiculturalism was broadly supported by both left- and right-wing parties. The criticism came primarily from the populist right (the Boerenpartij/Farmers' Party) and the far right (the Centrumpartij/Centre Party and Centrum Democraten/Centre Democrats).

For the Dutch Jews, this new social perspective had a number of implications. While in the repillarized period immediately following the war, the Jewish community had been seen mainly through the prism of religion, the new prism was culture—a change with far-reaching implications. Jewish culture had always served the purposes of religion and Zionism, but in this new social climate it had the chance to break free and develop into an independent, full-blown manifestation of Jewish identity. Many Jews, like other people in the Netherlands, became less strongly tied to their religion; older people gave up their membership of the Jewish denominations, and young people elected not to join them. In many cases, rather than indicating a lack of interest in Jewish identity, these choices grew out of an alternative approach to that identity. There were plenty of opportunities to explore Jewish culture: films, books, cuisine, and a wide range of music, from klezmer to Israeli pop. The personal connection to Jewish culture varied greatly from individual to individual, but the general trend was fuelled by a festival culture that brought together kindred spirits.⁷⁴

⁷³ B. Wallet, 'The Battle for Jewish Sympathy: The House of Orange, the Dutch Jews and Postwar Morality', in D. J. Wertheim (ed.), *The Jew as Legitimation: Jewish–Gentile Relations beyond Antisemitism and Philosemitism* (Basingstoke, 2017), 257–73.

⁷⁴ In the first edition of this book, Chaya Brasz strongly emphasized this development in her analysis: F. C. Brasz, 'Na de Tweede Wereldoorlog: Van kerkgenootschap naar culturele minderheid', in J. C. H. Blom, R. G. Fuks-Mansfeld, and I. Schöffer (eds.), *Geschiedenis van de joden in Nederland* (Amsterdam, 1995), 351–403; C. Brasz, 'After the Shoah: Continuity and Change in the Postwar Jewish Community of the Netherlands', *Jewish History*, 15/2 (2001), 149–68.

The organized Jewish community had no choice but to move with the current of social change. Government funding for religious expression met with growing opposition, but new opportunities opened up in the field of culture. New minorities had access to many opportunities and grants for cultural centres where they could teach their own language and traditions. Jewish congregations, seeking to qualify for the same grants, began to separate some of their cultural offerings from their religious activities. For instance, the NIK established the Jad Achat foundation to disseminate Jewish culture (which in this case actually included religion) among its own members and throughout Dutch society. There were also Jewish cultural centres of longer standing, inspired by developments in American Judaism and, in some cases, established to meet the grant conditions of the Claims Conference, the international Jewish organization that distributed the German reparation payments in support of the reconstruction of Jewish life in Europe. The idea of a Jewish Cultural Centre (Joods Cultureel Centrum), like the one first located at De Lairessestraat 13 and, from 1970 onwards, in Van de Boechorststraat in Amsterdam, was that of a place offering a wide range of Jewish activities. Since the synagogue was a religious meeting place, not all Jews still felt at home there; it was better to incorporate it into a building with Jewish sports and leisure activities, shops, and rooms for club meetings. Strikingly, this American model of the Jewish Cultural Centre received a new emphasis in Europe: such centres became one means of outreach to 'marginal Jews'.75

The ideal of the multicultural society led almost automatically to the association of Jews with other minorities. Yet at the institutional level, there was hardly any exchange or cooperation. While Dutch Jews were well organized and familiar with Dutch social codes, many other minorities were in quite the opposite position. This was made clear in part by a 1977 government decision to give Muslims the right to perform the ritual slaughter of animals for the purpose of meat production, by analogy with the Jewish situation. The Muslim community proved to lack the organization and structure to meet the statutory conditions governing the Jewish community. Many Jews felt a strong affinity with the new minorities and saw the struggle against discrimination and racism as an integral part of their own Jewish identity. Although antisemitism was often treated as a separate category, it was directly connected to the racism that Turkish, Surinamese, and Moroccan communities experienced in Dutch society. The Anne Frank Stichting—the Dutch foundation that managed the Anne Frank House from 1960 onwards, following the worldwide success of the famous diary—played a prominent role in the struggle against racism. In exhibitions and educational materials, the Stichting drew a direct connection between the persecution of the Jews as a new public moral framework and the struggle against racism. What was more controversial, especially in

 $^{^{75}\,}$ B. Wallet, ''Bringing In Those Who Are Far": Jewish Sociology and the Reconstruction of Jewish Life in Post-War Europe', *Journal of Religion in Europe*, 9/2 (2016), 225–46.

parts of the Jewish community, was the fact that, especially in the 1980s, the lessons of the Holocaust were linked to political positions. The Anne Frank House, which by then had grown into one of Amsterdam's main tourist attractions, later moderated its tone and regained the confidence of its Jewish support base. In 1985, with the backing of the Jewish community and other groups, the Landelijk Bureau Racismebestrijding (National Anti-Racism Office) was founded.

Activism

The wedding of Beatrix and Claus in 1966 prompted activism on the part of young Jews, the start of a trend that became ever more visible. Demonstrations and public protests became part of the political culture of the 1960s. There were many young Jewish participants, both in a wide range of 'general' activist groups and committees and in specifically Jewish contexts. Either way, they were inspired once again by the new morality rooted in the Second World War; the 'collaborationist' administrative elite on the Jewish Council was contrasted with the 'activist' Jewish resistance. It was the latter example that was followed by the young Jewish left-wing (and later right-wing) activists.

The campaign against the 1971 census stirred up considerable controversy. Although individual Jews had had qualms about registering their religious background since 1945, most of them still gave their religion as 'N.I.' (Nederlands Israëlietisch/Ashkenazi Jewish) or 'P.I.' (Portugees Israëlietisch/Sephardi Jewish). Activists, such as the artist Lucebert, pointed out that the capture, deportation, and mass murder of the Jews had been made possible by the faultless and detailed Dutch civil records. The protest against the census gained in force, and the authorities were under growing pressure to give up the plan, especially after Jews openly joined the debate. Although the census did ultimately take place, the changing public climate ensured that it would be the last that was ever held. This affair also led to Parliament's adoption of the country's first privacy laws.

One example of specifically Jewish activism was the campaign for the Soviet Jews. Starting in 1970, a solidarity committee for the Jews in the Soviet Union, headed by the eloquent Reform rabbi Awraham Soetendorp in The Hague, raised public awareness of the problem of Soviet Jews being forbidden to leave their country for the State of Israel. There was a worldwide network of such committees, supported by the Israeli foreign ministry, but the Dutch committee was the most successful. In 1982 some 800,000 signatures were collected in short order for the release of a 'refusenik' (PLATE 72). The international pressure exerted by such committees and the resulting political action by national parliaments led the Soviet Union to make concessions from time to time, allowing groups of Jews to leave in exchange for payment. The Dutch

⁷⁶ J. van der Lans and H. Vuijsje, Het Anne Frank Huis: Een biografie (Amsterdam, 2010).

nation was deeply engaged with the question of the Soviet Jews and the departure of many thousands of them. The Dutch embassy in Moscow represented Israel after diplomatic ties between the Soviet Union and the Jewish state were severed.

While the solidarity committee could count on a broad support base, including the community's administrative elites, it was not the only manifestation of youth activism. On the right wing, there was the Jewish Defence League, an independent Dutch organization formed in the 1970s after the example of the extremist rabbi Meir Kahane, which did not shy away from violent intimidation of political adversaries. In 1979, for example, the group burst into the studios of the left-wing VPRO public broadcasting company during a radio broadcast on the Palestinian question and used scissors to ruin audio recordings of interviews with Palestinian refugees in Lebanon.⁷⁷ A more peaceful protest was held in 1987 by the Jewish youth movements Bne Akiwa and Habonim, against the performance of the controversial play *Garbage, the City and Death* by the German playwright Rainer Maria Fassbinder. The activist group 'Alle Cohens aan dek' ('All Cohens on deck') organized the protest outside the Rotterdam theatre where the play, which they argued was antisemitic, was to be performed. The protests were successful, in the sense that they prevented Fassbinder's play from being performed.⁷⁸

There was also longer-term Jewish activism around the theme of antisemitism. While it had previously been felt that the fight against antisemitism was not a cause for Jews, this was another piece of conventional wisdom rejected by Jewish youth, who became more assertive in pointing out and combating antisemitism. Meanwhile, the changing culture of memory and the new public morality had made antisemitism strictly taboo. It was seen as an attack not only on Jews, but also on the foundations of Dutch society as a whole. Richard Stein, originally Jewish American, was the initiator of the Stichting Bestrijding Antisemitisme (Foundation to Combat Antisemitism; Stiba), which first brought antisemitism in the Netherlands to the attention of the public. The lawsuits filed by Stiba—such as one against the Goerees, a married couple of evangelists who preached that Jews themselves were to blame for the Holocaust—generated a great deal of publicity. But some Dutch Jews, such as Martin van Amerongen, editor-in-chief of the weekly opinion magazine *De Groene Amsterdammer*, and Mau Kopuit, his counterpart at the *NIW*, objected to Stiba's activities. They felt it

⁷⁷ K. Digan, '"The Activist Jew" Responds to Changing Dutch Perceptions of Israel', in Ensel and Gans (eds.), *The Holocaust, Israel and 'the Jew*', 24I–57.

⁷⁸ E. Gans, *Gojse nijd & joods narcisme: De verhouding tussen joden en niet-joden in Nederland* (Amsterdam, 1994), 27–38; ead., 'Ischa Meijer, De soldaat van Oranje en de Fassbinderaffaire: Zere plekken in de naoorlogse verhouding tussen joden en niet-joden in Nederland', in Berg and Wallet (eds.), *Wie niet weg is, is gezien*, 153–71.

⁷⁹ E. Gans, 'Israel: Source of Divergence', in Ensel and Gans (eds.), *The Holocaust, Israel and 'the Jew'*, 233–40; R. A. Stein, 'Nabeschouwing: Nederlands antisemitisme en de strijd tegen ideeën', in D. van Arkel et al. (eds.), *Veertigjaar na '45: Visies op het hedendaagse antisemitisme* (Amsterdam, 1985), 278–300.

was engaged in a witch hunt, in a social climate where, on the whole, antisemitism was firmly rejected.⁷⁹

Israel and Zionism

Solidarity with the Jewish State of Israel followed almost automatically from the new public morality. During the Second World War, too many Dutch people had neglected the Jews in their hour of need. They were determined not to make the same mistake again. The Arab–Israeli conflict had the potential to become a new Holocaust, involving the mass murder of the Israelis. It was seen as essential to prevent that by any means necessary. Good relations with Israel were also encouraged by the Cold War context, in which the country was seen as a stable Western enclave in a region largely within the Soviet sphere of influence. Furthermore, all political movements had their own specific motivations for pro-Israel policies. To social democrats, the country was a socialist project akin to their own; to liberals, it was a free country, an outpost of the West; and the confessional parties engaged with Israel for religious reasons.⁸⁰

This broad political support was most apparent around the time of the Arab–Israeli wars of 1967 and 1973. The Dutch people expressed this support through mass demonstrations, fundraising campaigns, bumper stickers reading 'We stand behind Israel', and blood donations. In 1967 twelve million guilders (more than two thousand times the average annual income) were raised for Israel in a few weeks, and Queen Juliana, a vocal friend of Israel, even suggested that this sum was on the small side. In 1973 the defence minister, Henk Vredeling, authorized top-secret transports of much-needed weapons to Israel. Joop den Uyl, the prime minister, was not informed of the operation, but Vredeling knew of his declared sympathy for Israel. Alongside the portraits of Den Uyl's wife and the queen on the prime minister's desk, there was one other photograph—of the Israeli prime minister, Golda Meir. The Dutch political stance led to an oil boycott of Arab countries and a symbolic car-free Sunday.⁸¹

For Dutch Jews, the broad support for Israel was a mixed blessing. On the one hand, it was a relief to be swimming *with* the tide of Dutch public opinion for once. On the other hand, Jews were seen as unsalaried ambassadors of the State of Israel, representing both Israeli policies and the new public morality inspired by the Second World War. In Jewish circles, commitment to the State of Israel was expressed in many ways. The Collectieve Israel Actie received large donations from both individuals and Jewish

⁸⁰ F. Grünfeld, Nederland en het Nabije Oosten: De Nederlandse rol in de internationale politiek ten aanzien van het Arabisch-Israëlisch conflict, 1973–1982 (doctoral dissertation, Rijksuniversiteit Limburg, Maastricht, 1991); Soetendorp, Pragmatisch of principieel.

⁸¹ F. Peeters, Gezworen vrienden: Het geheime bondgenootschap tussen Nederland en Israël (Amsterdam, 1997).

⁸² I. Lipschits, 'Het was geen sprookje: De invloed van het ontstaan van de staat Israël op de joodse gemeenschap', in H. M. van Emden (ed.), *Het Nederlandse Jodendom 1945–2020* (Amsterdam, 1996), 63–77. For the impact of the events surrounding Israel on a typical Dutch Jewish family, the Vuijsjes, see M. Vuijsje, *Ons kamp: Een min of meer joodse geschiedenis* (Amsterdam, 2012), 166–205.

organizations. During the wars, young Dutch people went to Israel as volunteers. For both Jewish and non-Jewish young people, a stay in a kibbutz, however short or long, became a standard part of the transition to adulthood.⁸²

This period was a high point for the NZB; at the same time, this leading Zionist organization was confronted with the rise of a new variety of social activism, which included the Arab-Israeli conflict. The Nederlands Palestina Komitee (Dutch Palestine Committee), formed in 1969, drew attention to the plight of the Palestinians in the aftermath of the 1967 war and identified with the Palestinian resistance organizations, especially the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO). On this issue, the Dutch political left was divided into conflicting camps. Was the Palestinian struggle comparable to other conflicts in which an underdog was pitted against the superior strength of a right-wing or colonial regime, like those in Nicaragua, Chile, Rhodesia, South Africa, and Northern Ireland? Or was social democratic Israel the underdog, battling the superior strength of the corrupt, oppressive Arab regimes? This set off fierce debates in activist circles, as well as within the left-wing parties PvdA, PPR, and PSP. Left-wing Jews frequently wrestled with conflicting beliefs and loyalties. Renate Rubinstein, writing for Vrij Nederland magazine under the name of Tamar, vividly described this inner conflict in her book Jood in Arabië, Goi in Israël ('Jew in Arabia, Goy in Israel', 1967). Partly in response to pro-Palestinian activism, a new variety of pro-Israeli activism emerged, for instance in the Werkgroep Israel (Israel Working Group, active 1973–81). Young Jews and non-Jews worked together there towards a two-state solution, departing from the position of the NZB and the Israeli embassy. In their own circles, they had to defend their interest in the Palestinian question, while in the public domain, they clashed bitterly with the Nederlands Palestina Komitee over the issue of the State of Israel's right to exist.83

Against the background of this domestic debate, in conjunction with the growing influence of the European Economic Community (EEC) on Dutch foreign policy and a UN resolution equating Zionism with racism, a new initiative was launched. In 1974 R. A. (Bob) Levisson and some like-minded associates set up the Centrum Informatie en Documentatie Israel (Israel Documentation and Information Centre; CIDI), for the purpose of informing the public, politicians, and journalists about Israel and the conflict. CIDI developed into a serious political force in the Dutch capital, especially after one young staff member, Ronny Naftaniel, published a 'black book' about the Arab boycott in 1978. One of his revelations was that Dutch multinationals were issuing statements that their employees were not Jewish in order to land lucrative contracts in the Arab world. A parliamentary committee headed by Harry van den Bergh, a PvdA parliamentarian, investigated the boycott and confirmed CIDI's claims. This led to a

⁸³ R. Ensel, *Haatspraak: Antisemitisme—een 21e-eeuwse geschiedenis* (Amsterdam, 2014), 32–57; Püttmann, *Markante Nederlandse zionisten*, 121–9. For Renate Rubinstein, see P. Damen, *Renate Rubinstein: Minibiografie* (Amsterdam, 1993); H. Goedkoop, *Iedereen was er: Een feest voor Renate Rubinstein* (Amsterdam, 2015).

clear Dutch political stance rejecting all forms of discrimination against Jews, including varieties that used anti-Zionism as a pretext. Meanwhile, Naftaniel took over from Levisson as the director of CIDI and became a familiar face in the media (PLATE 73). After Stiba's defeat, CIDI took over its role in the fight against antisemitism, through dialogue, legal action, and annual reports on antisemitic incidents.

The First Lebanon War in 1982 led to cracks in the unified front around Israel. In both the Jewish community and Dutch society in general, the massacre in the Palestinian refugee camps of Sabra and Chatilla—perpetrated by Israel's Lebanese allies, the Phalangists—met with disappointment, horror, and public criticism. Another factor was that the Israeli Labour Party had been toppled from its throne, and the right wing (Herut, later Likud) had become a force to be reckoned with in Israeli politics. The Dutch Jewish debate about Israel was conducted in a very controversial collection of essays: *Israël: een blanco cheque?* ('Israel: A Blank Cheque?'). Some left-wing Dutch Jews backed the Israeli peace movement through the non-profit organization Friends of Peace Now. The outbreak of the first intifada in 1987 only strengthened their commitment to the cause.⁸⁴

As long as the Cold War continued, solidarity with Israel remained the prevailing sentiment. The Netherlands saw itself as a special friend of Israel and made that clear, time and again, through its actions and social engagement. The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the subsequent collapse of the Soviet Union ushered in an entirely new geopolitical order. This had various consequences. For one thing, it became possible to start a peace process in which Israel, the Palestinians, and the Arab nations engaged in direct dialogue. This resulted in peace with Jordan in 1993 (the second peace treaty, following the one with Egypt in 1979) and in the Oslo Accords with the PLO, which opened the way to the gradual construction of an autonomous Palestinian state. In the Netherlands, too, Zionist and Palestinian organizations reached out to one another. Secondly, the nature of the Zionist movement changed. During the Cold War, one of Zionism's main objectives, besides support for Israel, had been free access to emigration to the Jewish state for all Jews around the world. After 1989 eastern European and Soviet Jews were free to emigrate to Israel, the United States, or western Europe. In the Netherlands, the NZB transformed itself in 1992 into the Federatie Nederlandse Zionisten (Federation of Dutch Zionists; FNZ), in which the range of Zionist groups was represented. Although the intent was to reconnect Dutch Jews to the Zionist movement, the FNZ was largely unsuccessful in that respect. The organization could not match the prominence that the NZB had achieved in the first decades after the Second World War.85 Thirdly, once the Cold War was over, the special relationship between the Netherlands and Israel was no longer an unquestionable fact. Criticism of

⁸⁴ A. van den Houten and M. Kopuit, Wij staan achter Israël, wij stonden achter Israël, wij hebben achter Israël gestaan: De evenwichtige politiek van Nederland (Amstelveen, 1981); S. Leydesdorff, M. Mock, and M. van Weezel (eds.), Israël: Een blanco cheque? (Amsterdam, 1983).

85 Püttmann, Markante Nederlandse zionisten, 134–9.

Israel grew louder and support for the Palestinian movement grew stronger, particularly on the political left, as the peace process ran into one obstacle after another.

The Long-Term Impact of the Second World War

Because the focus in the 1960s was on Jews as victims, a good deal of attention was devoted to psychological issues. At first, it was thought that camp survivors and those who had gone into hiding would recover from their experiences fairly rapidly, but psychiatrists soon realized this was not true. The first to arrive at that insight was the Jewish psychiatrist Joost Meerloo, who arrived in London in 1943 and served as a psychological adviser to the Military Authority. Even before the war ended, he predicted that psychological issues would be among the most serious ones after the country was liberated. 86 Louis van Gasteren's film Begrijpt u nu waarom ik huil . . . ('Now do you understand why I'm crying . . . ', 1972) drew a great deal of attention to the survivors and created more sympathy for them. This documentary featured the work of the Leiden professor Jan Bastiaans, who experimented with having patients relive their wartime experiences under the influence of LSD in his research institute, Centrum '40-'45. Less controversial methods were used by Jewish psychiatrists, such as Andries van Dantzig, Hans Keilson, Herman Musaph, the father and son Jacques and Louis Tas, and Eddy de Wind. But what they all had in common was a belief in some kind of 'KZ syndrome', a term for the specific long-term psychological impact of concentration camp experiences. The physician Elie Aron Cohen completed a doctoral study of 'post-concentration camp syndrome' in 1952 and devoted himself to supporting the survivors. Special care for them was offered in the Sinai-Kliniek, the psychiatric institution that replaced Het Apeldoornsche Bosch, which changed its name to the Sinai Centrum after a merger with the community mental health service Joodse Ambulante Geestelijke Gezondheidszorg. From 2008 onwards, the Centrum had not only an outpatient clinic in Amersfoort and a part-time course of treatment, but also an inpatient department in Amstelveen.87

In 1973 this new interest in the survivors found political expression when the Wet uitkeringen vervolgingsslachtoffers 1940–1945 (Victims of Persecution (1940–1945) Benefits Act; WUV) came into force. Until that time, the government had granted benefits only to former members of the resistance and political prisoners, but now the paradigm was shifting and there was a new emphasis on the victims. The WUV was clearly intended in part to pay for psychological assistance. Jewish members of Parlia-

⁸⁶ Bossenbroek, De Meelstreep, 80-9.

⁸⁷ J. Bastiaans, Psychosomatische gevolgen van onderdrukking en verzet (Amsterdam, 1957); E. A. Cohen, Het Duitse Concentratiekamp: Een medische en psychologische studie (Paris, 1952); R. Fuks-Mansfeld, Wie in tranen zaait . . . Geschiedenis van de Joodse Geestelijke Gezondheidszorg in Nederland (Assen, 1997); De Haan, Na de ondergang, 132–9.

ment, such as Joop Voogd and Jacques Baruch, played an important role behind the scenes in drafting the legislation. In 1972 the possible release from prison of the Drie van Breda (discussed below) had resulted in a wave of protest and in renewed attention to the pain and sorrow suffered by survivors on a daily basis. These events had helped to create an favourable climate for the adoption of the WUV. Jewish pastoral care, which had the same motivations, was made available through the JMW with financial support from the social affairs ministry.⁸⁸

In the 1980s and 1990s two related groups began to attract more attention as well. First of all, following a successful conference for 'hidden children' in New York City in 1991 (with some Dutch participants), a similar event was held in Amsterdam in 1992. There had been a great demand for such conferences, and the JMW played a central role in organizing and running them and providing follow-up care. Secondly, a 'second generation' was coming of age, whose members had grown up in households where one or more parents was a war survivor. Again, this group first received attention outside the Netherlands, when Helen Epstein published *Children of the Holocaust* in 1979. In 1981 the journalist Helene Weijel introduced the term *kinderen van het KZ-syndroom* ('children-of-the-concentration-camp syndrome') in the Netherlands, and conferences specifically for this group were held from 1990 onwards in Woudschoten and elsewhere. The two groups also set up organizations to represent their collective interests: Het Ondergedoken Kind (The Hidden Child; HOK, 1994–2006), Het Joodse Ondergedoken Kind (The Jewish Hidden Child; JOK, 1995), and De Joodse Naoorlogse Generatie (The Jewish Postwar Generation; Jonag, 1994).

Several incidents in the 1970s made it clear that the Second World War had become a raw nerve, invested with great moral significance. When Presser raised the issue, in Ashes in the Wind, of whether it had been right to convict Friedrich Weinreb as a war criminal, he unleashed a furious debate that revealed a political divide, more or less between the left and the right. Renate Rubinstein and Aad Nuis defended Weinreb and regarded him as an ingenious hero of the resistance who had not received the recognition he deserved after the war because of his Jewish identity. Weinreb himself published his three-volume memoirs in 1969: Collaboratie en Verzet 1940–1945, een poging tot ontmythologisering ('Collaboration and Resistance, 1940–1945: An Attempt at Demystification'). The prominent Dutch authors and public intellectuals Willem Frederik Hermans,

⁸⁸ De Haan, Na de ondergang, 140–6; H. Piersma, Bevochten recht: Politieke besluitvorming rond de wetten voor oorlogsslachtoffers (Amsterdam, 2010); J. Withuis, Erkenning: Van oorlogstrauma naar klaagcultuur (Amsterdam, 2002).

⁸⁹ R. Anstadt and A. Rottenberg (eds.), Kinderen die alles moesten goedmaken: Hoe de oorlog doorwerkt in het leven van de Joodse naoorlogse generatie (Amsterdam, 2008); H. Epstein, Children of the Holocaust: Conversations with Sons and Daughters of Survivors (New York, 1979); B. Evers-Emden and B. J. Flim, Ondergedoken geweest: Een afgesloten verleden? (Kampen, 1995); H. Weijel, In twee werelden: Gesprekken met kinderen van joodse overlevenden (Amsterdam, 1985).

Abel Herzberg, and Henriette Boas insisted that Weinreb was a charlatan who had endangered many lives during the war and collaborated with the enemy. In 1970 the government instructed the RIOD to produce an official report, which was presented in 1976. The report made mincemeat of Weinreb's claims, but even after that, he still had a handful of loyal supporters who went on defending his actions during the war. 90

Perhaps even more social unrest was caused by the possible release of the Drie van Breda (the 'Breda Three', three German war criminals imprisoned in the Dutch city of Breda) in 1972. Their original death sentences had been commuted to life, and according to the standard rules, that meant they would soon be eligible for release. The justice minister, Dries van Agt, said that he was inclined to grant his consent, being 'Aryan', unlike his Jewish predecessor in that office, Carel H. F. Polak. This last remark caused particular outrage. The possible release of the convicts brought about a social movement in which Jewish war survivors played a prominent role. The Jewish parliamentarian Anneke Goudsmit, a member of D66, requested a debate in the House of Representatives; it turned out to be a very emotional affair, resulting in the adoption of a motion opposing their release put forward by Joop Voogd, a PvdA member from the liberal wing of the Reformed Church and the son of a Jewish mother. Not until 1989 were the two remaining war criminals released, partly at the urging of the Jewish intellectual Abel Herzberg and the Jewish politician Ivo Samkalden, but against the wishes of the organizations formally representing the Jewish community.⁹¹

This was followed in 1976 by the affair surrounding the Dutch art collector and war criminal Pieter Menten. As a member of the SS, he had not only looted Jewish art in eastern Europe but had also been involved in the mass murder of Jews. Thanks to the perseverance of Henriette Boas, Hans Knoop, and the Israeli journalist Haviv Kanaan, the story came to light and Menten, who had initially escaped to Switzerland, was finally arrested and put on trial. The political debate about the investigation of Menten caused a serious shake-up in The Hague. The Menten affair shed light on the role of Dutch individuals in the Holocaust, an uncomfortable truth that was only gradually admitted into the discourse on the Second World War. 92

One final affair was unrelated to the Holocaust, but very relevant to the more

⁹⁰ D. Giltay Veth and A. J. van der Leeuw, Rapport door het Rijksinstituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie uitgebracht aan de minister van Justitie inzake de activiteiten van drs. F. Weinreb gedurende de jaren 1940–1945, in het licht van nadere gegevens bezien, 2 vols. (The Hague, 1976); R. Grüter, Een fantast schrijft geschiedenis: De afaires rond Friedrich Weinreb (Amsterdam, 1997).

⁹¹ H. Piersma, De drie van Breda: Duitse oorlogsmisdadigers in Nederlandse gevangenschap, 1945–1989 (Amsterdam, 2005).

⁹² J. C. H. Blom, A. C. 't Hart, and I. Schöffer, *De afaire-Menten 1945–1976: Eindrapport van de Commissie van onderzoek betrefende het opsporings- en vervolgingsbeleid inzake Menten vanaf de bevrijding tot de zomer van 1976 en de invloeden waaraan dat beleid al dan niet heeft blootgestaan (The Hague, 1979); H. Knoop, De zaak Menten, het complete verhaal (Hilversum, 2016); P. Micheels, <i>De waarheidszoekster Henriette Boas: Een leven voor de Joodse zaak* (Amsterdam, 2016), 191–216.

general culture of memory of the Second World War because of the serious moral accusations involved. In 1979, at a press conference aired on both TV channels, Loe de Jong claimed that Willem Aantjes, leader of the CDA (Christian Democratic) parliamentary party, had been a member of the Waffen-SS and served as a guard in the Port Natal prison camp in Assen. Aantjes denied this but resigned and was succeeded by Ruud Lubbers. A special investigating committee concluded that Aantjes had signed up, not for the Waffen-SS, but for the Germanic SS, so that he could return home from *Arbeidseinsatz* (forced labour) in Germany. Once he was back in the Netherlands, he refused to serve as an SS officer and was imprisoned in Port Natal. Although Aantjes would have liked to return to political life, his career was over. The tone of the whole debate was highly emotional and politicized and demonstrated the extent to which the Second World War had become a moral touchstone. It also shows the important role Loe de Jong had acquired as the national historian, whose judgement carried enormous weight. 93

Beyond question, historical writing about the Second World War had become a matter of national importance. Abel Herzberg had laid the foundation for the historical study of the Holocaust in the Netherlands in his Kroniek der Jodenvervolging ('Chronicle of the Persecution of the Jews'). Presser continued down that path, in an emotional vein, in his two-volume Ondergang: de vervolging en verdelging van het Nederlandse Jodendom 1940-1945 (abridged English edition: Ashes in the Wind), while the RIOD director Loe de Jong dealt with almost every aspect of the war in his voluminous Geschiedenis van het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden tijdens de Tweede Wereldoorlog ('History of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in the Second World War', 14 vols., 1969-94). The moral dimension, a reflection of the prevailing cultural climate, was clearly present, especially in those last two works. Historical research, the culture of memory, and psychological support went hand in hand and reinforced the emphasis on Jews both as victims and as a moral benchmark. It was not until 1983, when the Amsterdam historian Hans Blom delivered his inaugural lecture, 'In de ban van goed en fout' ('Obsessed with Right and Wrong' again, the word fout refers specifically to being 'on the wrong side' in the war), that the historical study of the 1940-5 period became less morally fraught, with an emphasis on scholarly studies of specialized topics, on comparative research, and on situating the war years in the broader twentieth-century context.94

⁹³ R. Bouwman, *De val van een bergredenaar: Het politieke leven van Willem Aantjes* (Amsterdam, 2002); B. Smits, *Loe de Jong 1914–2005: Historicus met een missie* (Amsterdam, 2014).

⁹⁴ J. C. H. Blom, 'In de ban van goed of fout? Wetenschappelijke geschiedschrijving over de bezettingstijd in Nederland', in id., *Crisis, bezetting en herstel: Tien studies over Nederland 1930–1950* (The Hague, 1989), 102–20; see also Blom, 'Een kwart eeuw later: Nog altijd in de ban van goed en fout?', in Blom, *In de ban van goed en fout: Geschiedschrijving over de bezettingstijd in Nederland* (Amsterdam 2007), 155–79; P. Bregstein, *Gesprekken met Jacques Presser* (Amsterdam, 1972); I. de Haan, 'Breuklijnen in de geschiedschrijving van de Jodenvervolging: Een overzicht van het recente Nederlandse debat', *BMGN* 123 (2008), 31–70; Kristel, *Geschiedschrijving als*

Religion and Internal Polarization

While the emphasis in the 1940s and 1950s had been on a discourse of unity, and there had been broad umbrella organizations for the Jewish community—first the JCC, and later the NIK—all that changed in the 1970s. Broad, inclusive organizations came to be seen as colourless and ill-suited to the forthright opinions and actions required in the new era. The buzzword was polarization, which Joop den Uyl (PvdA prime minister from 1973 to 1977) and others saw as an essential step towards raising the issues that mattered. This led to sharply defined left- and right-wing camps in political and social debate and also profoundly influenced the Jewish community. In that context, it was difficult for the NIK, the PIK, and individual traditional Jewish congregations to stay true to the long-established model of the unified congregation, a concept that came under great pressure from various quarters. 95

Many Jews withdrew formally from the religious denominations. Until 1984, when the 'silver cord' (zilveren koorde) between the national authorities and the old nineteenth-century religious denominations was severed, the authorities had always kept the NIK informed of Jews' addresses. This was because, in accordance with the old 'public church' (volkskerkelijke) principle, all Jews in the Netherlands had been seen as NIK members, unless they had actively left the denomination. When this practice came to an end, the true size of the NIK became apparent; from that time on, only paying members could be counted. Between 1988—the last year in which the old figures were used—and 1989, the number of registered NIK members dropped from 10,569 to 5,801.96 The NIK was still the largest Jewish organization, but the membership numbers showed a persistent downward trend. Secularization played a major role, but so did individualization. Many Jews no longer felt the need for a communal context for their experience of Judaism. They kept up parts of the Jewish religious and cultural traditions in their own circles of family and friends, without a rabbi or congregation. In 1980, the journalist and ba'al teshuvah (returnee to Judaism) Dick Houwaart published a collection of interviews with a telling title: My Judaism. No longer was the emphasis on normative Orthodox or Zionist Judaism, defined by leaders and institutionalized. Instead, the spotlight was on the 'marginal Jews', who defined and expressed their Jewish identity in their own individual ways. This made a diverse range of interpretations of Judaism visible.97

opdracht; N. van der Zee, Jacques Presser: Het gelijk van de twijfel (Amsterdam, 1988). For a broader analysis, see also H. W. von der Dunk, Voorbij de verboden drempel: De Shoah in het geschiedbeeld (Amsterdam, 1990).

⁹⁵ Wallet, Van Trigt, and Polak, *Die ons heeft laten leven*, 39–47. 96 NIK annual reports for 1988 and 1989.

⁹⁷ D. Houwaart (ed.), *Mijn Jodendom* (The Hague, 1980); J. Sanders, 'Opbouw en continuïteit na 1945', in J. Michman, H. Beem, and D. Michman, *Pinkas: Geschiedenis van de joodse gemeenschap in Nederland* (Antwerp, 1992), 228–68; id., 'Assimilatie, secularisatie en religie: De vorming van een gepolariseerde Joodse gemeenschap', in Van Emden (ed.), *Het Nederlandse Jodendom 1945–2020*, 27–62; P. van Trigt, 'Een religieuze crisis? Secularisatie, religie en de Nederlandse joden in de lange jaren zestig', in Berg and Wallet (eds.), *Wie niet weg*

The Jewish religious landscape changed radically. On the left, the Reform movement (LJG) was in the ascendant. Having started over after the war with a single congregation, it spread across the Netherlands; leading roles were played by the rabbis Jacob and Awraham Soetendorp, David Lilienthal, Sonny Herman, and Edward van Voolen. The LJG was an especially appealing alternative to young people and those who had become estranged from Judaism, since it combined Jewish tradition with social relevance. In LJG congregations, themes such as women's liberation, social justice, and Zionist engagement could be woven into a Jewish religious perspective on life. The Reform denomination VLRJ ultimately had ten member congregations throughout the country and thus formed an alternative to the Orthodox congregations in every region. Within the global World Union for Progressive Judaism, which convened regularly in Amsterdam, the Dutch Reform movement played an important and conspicuous role.⁹⁸

The fiercest debates were those within the NIK—with the largest congregation, the NIHS, taking centre stage. Distinct left and right wings formed, became fully polemicized, and tried to set their stamp on the 'unified' organization. One disagreement that emerged between them was over how to respond to the growing LJG. Until the 1950s, the Orthodox establishment had rejected Reform Judaism but never seen it as a real threat. It had been too small to worry about and too much of an enclave, mainly for German Jews. Jacob Soetendorp's arrival on the scene had changed that. He accentuated the differences from the NIK and, in his frequent media appearances, took on the unofficial role of 'national rabbi', to the displeasure of the much larger NIK congregations. The left wing of the NIK wanted not to make too much of the differences but instead to aim for cooperation wherever possible. This position grew out of the still-influential Zionist agenda of unity. Various initiatives were undertaken to set up an umbrella organization, but they remained unsuccessful until the 1990s. The Reform and Orthodox camps did work together in specific areas where common social interests were at stake, but never when religious matters were involved. The right wing of the NIK opposed all forms of cooperation with the LJG, because they refused to acknowledge the denomination's very right to exist. They did not recognize the Reform movement as a legitimate variety of Judaism and, moreover, believed that the mere existence of the LJG alongside the NIK had disrupted the unity of Dutch Jewry.99

is, is gezien, 189–201. For the broader social context, see D. Hellema, 'Religieuze beleving en maatschappelijk engagement: Van de jaren zeventig tot nu', in Van Dam, Kennedy, and Wielenga (eds.), *Achter de zuilen*, 231–54.

⁹⁸ C. Brasz, *In de tenten van Jaakov: Impressies van 75 jaar Progressief Jodendom in Nederland 1931*–2006 (Amsterdam, 2006); F. Friedeberg, G. Verbeek, and N. Vogel, *30 jaar Liberaal Joodse Gemeente Rotterdam 1968–1998: Jubileumpublicatie* (Rotterdam, 1998); C. Brasz, 'Dutch Progressive Jews and their Unexpected Key Role in Europe', *European Judaism*, 49/1 (2016), 5–18.

⁹⁹ J. Sanders, 'Samenwerken—of niet: De onderlinge verhouding tussen de joodse kerkgenootschappen in Nederland', in Berg and Wallet (eds.), *Wie niet weg is, is gezien, 79*–95.

This dispute came to a head in 1966, when the LJG congregation in Amsterdam opened a new synagogue opposite the RAI convention centre in Amsterdam-Zuid. There was disagreement as to whether the Orthodox board members of the NIHS and the PIG should accept the invitation to the event. The two boards had originally agreed to attend, but that was unacceptable to the right wing of the NIHS, which after great effort persuaded the chief rabbi, Aron Schuster, to issue a *pesak din* (a ruling based on Jewish religious law). Schuster forbade the board members to attend the religious ceremony in the Reform synagogue but explicitly left them the option of going to any reception held afterwards. So the NIHS board members had to withdraw their acceptance of the invitation. But the *parnasim* of the PIG went to the ceremony, because Hakham Salomon Rodrigues Pereira did not issue a prohibition. From 1966, that *pesak* set the ground rules for relations between the NIK and the LJG congregations; they could work together in administrative terms but had to maintain the dividing lines in the religious domain.¹⁰⁰

As a follower of the Mizrachi movement, Rabbi Schuster had steered a moderate middle course up to his resignation in 1969, striving both to uphold the specifically Dutch Jewish tradition of Chief Rabbi Joseph Hirsch Dünner and to forge connections with the path chosen by the Israeli chief rabbinate. Schuster was in especially close contact with the Ashkenazi chief rabbi of Israel, Isser Yehuda Unterman. He was also among the initiators of the Conference of European Rabbis, a forum where the chief rabbis of Europe's long-established Jewish communities could meet. The first conference was held in Amsterdam in 1957. At the CER meetings, efforts were made to maintain the traditional moderate course in the context of the growing Reform movement on the one hand and the increasingly vocal right wing on the other. While Schuster kept a watchful eye on the religious dividing lines separating the NIK from the LJG, he was just as concerned about the impact of the eastern European pietistic tradition of the hasidim and of the young people who visited yeshivas.

Meir Just, who succeeded Schuster as chief rabbi in 1975, was much less restrained. He saw it as his duty to promote Jewish life however he could, in part through the vehicle of eastern European Jewish traditions. The polarized climate raised the profile of that branch of Orthodoxy. In Amsterdam, the Kollel Chacham Zwi was founded, where married Jewish men, some of them from outside the Netherlands, led a life of Jewish scholarship. At the same time, the unity of the Jewish educational system was fragmented. Until then, the diverse parts of the Jewish community had all been served by the two Jewish private schools (Joods Bijzonder Onderwijs; JBO): the primary school Rosj Pina and the secondary school Maimonides Lyceum. But in 1974 a new strictly Orthodox Jewish school, Het Cheider, opened its doors (PLATE 75). The driving force behind it was A. J. U. (Adje) Cohen, originally from Rotterdam, who had been a fighter in the wartime resistance. He gave the first lessons in his own apart-

¹⁰⁰ Wallet, Van Trigt, and Polak, Die ons heeft laten leven, 36–9.

ment. Cheider set itself apart from the JBO schools by devoting a good deal more time to Jewish education, using eastern Yiddish as the language of education, offering separate classes for boys and girls, and adding its own accents to the required Dutch curriculum.¹⁰¹

The progressive wing of the NIK and NIHS stood out just as sharply—not only because of its 'flexible' attitude towards the LJG, but also in connection with women's liberation. After the war, the denomination had granted women the right to vote, but they still could not stand for office. In local synagogue council elections, this became one of the themes of the progressive factions. The conservative position was especially entrenched in this case because of a pre-war decision by the rabbinate, which made this one of the dividing lines with the LJG. But in 1978 the women's group Deborah did not let that stop them from putting the issue on the agenda repeatedly, under the leadership of the Orthodox feminist Bloeme Evers-Emden. Within the Chief Rabbinate in Utrecht—known from 1988 onwards as the Interprovinciaal Opperrabbinaat (Interprovincial Chief Rabbinate; IPOR)—it was Chief Rabbi Elieser Berlinger who first permitted women to serve in representative and board positions. In the Rotterdam region, they gained that right in 1979. The question was then whether congregations in those regions could send women representatives to the overarching NIK Central Committee. In parallel with this discussion, the issue was also fiercely debated in the Amsterdam NIHS. In the NIK, women's right to stand for office was acknowledged in 1998, whereas the NIHS agreed to the same principle, though in a somewhat modified form, in 2009 under the leadership of Chief Rabbi Aryeh Leib Ralbag. 102

The main lesson of the polarized religious climate in the Jewish Netherlands was that Dutch Jewry, once so proud and independent, had become fully integrated into global Jewry. Before the Second World War, the NIK had managed to prevent the fragmentation of the religious landscape through the concept of the unified congregation, in which Jews from across the religious spectrum worked together, and that model had remained in good working order in the 1940s and 1950s, fuelled by Zionist ideals. But those days were gone for good. Dutch Judaism now reflected the full religious diversity of international Judaism: alongside the growing LJG, there was also a strict Orthodox wing affiliated with the Chabad movement and with other movements rooted in eastern Europe. Even individualistic 'cultural Jews' looked abroad for models, mainly to the English-speaking world and Israel. Those who would have preferred to cling to the old Amsterdam minhag and the Dünnerian model of the *species hollandia judaica* in their undiluted form were forced to recognize that they were being overtaken by history and, furthermore, being dismissed as old-fashioned oligarchs, nostalgic for the days of the diaspora.

¹⁰¹ Ibid. 112–13, 120–9.

¹⁰² P. van Trigt, Een kleine kehilla met de jeroesje van een grote: De geschiedenis van de Nederlands Israëlitische Gemeente Rotterdam 1945–2007 (Rotterdam, 2007), 50; Wallet, Van Trigt, and Polak, Die ons heeft laten leven, 134–5.

Cultural Diversity

In multicultural Dutch society, Jewish culture became a permanent part of the landscape. Because the Jewish community was so central to Dutch society, issues previously seen as internal community affairs began to attract the notice of much wider swathes of society. This became apparent in various ways. Jews in influential positions, such as politicians, journalists, authors, and scholars, could bring up their Jewish identity without hesitation. In literature, theatre, and cinema, Jewish characters and themes were no longer shunned or confined to a niche, but became part of the mainstream range of cultural offerings.

Jewish authors reflected the diversity of the community. 103 Besides writers who had grown up firmly in the Orthodox or Zionist tradition, such as Abel Herzberg and his daughter Judith, there were others from the margins, born of mixed marriages, such as Harry Mulisch and Marcel Möring. In the work of Dutch Jewish authors, the Second World War played a pivotal role. 104 Harry Mulisch became one of the leading post-war authors. As the son of a Jewish mother and an Austrian father, he presented himself as the embodiment of the war. His vast body of work returns to the theme of the war again and again, in novels such as Het stenen bruidsbed ('The Stone Bridal Bed', 1959), De aanslag (1982; translated into English as The Assault, 1987), and Siegfried (2001; English translation 2003). He described his experiences as a reporter on the Eichmann trial in Jerusalem in De zaak 40/61, een reportage (1961, translated into English as Criminal Case 40/61: The Trial of Adolf Eichmann, 2005). 105 Another author whose books made a strong impression was Gerhard Durlacher, who wrote about his experiences as a Jewish boy in the camps. 106 Other Jewish writers were inspired by the aftermath of the war, such as Marga Minco in her novella Het bittere kruid (1957; translated into English as Bitter Herbs, 1960), which became a fixture of the curriculum in many secondary schools. Judith Herzberg explored how post-war Jewish family life dealt with memories of the war in the play Leedvermaak ('Schadenfreude', 1982). 107 Zionism and Israel also inspired authors from various generations, such as Abel Herzberg, Leon de Winter, and Arnon Grunberg. They approached the subject in very different ways: Herzberg was an outspoken Zionist, and De Winter a passionate defender of Israel's right to exist, but Grunberg generally took a cynical view of the Jewish state, regarding it as anything

¹⁰³ For a survey, see D. Meijer (ed.), Levi in de Lage Landen: 350 jaar joodse schrijvers in de Nederlandse literatuur (Amsterdam, 1999).

¹⁰⁴ For the methodological and moral questions surrounding the theme of the Shoah in literature, see S. Dresden, *Vervolging, vernietiging, literatuur* (Amsterdam, 1991).

¹⁰⁵ H. Mulisch, *De zaak* 40/61: *Een reportage* (Amsterdam, 1961).

¹⁰⁶ G. L. Durlacher, Strepen aan de hemel: Oorlogsherinneringen (Amsterdam, 1985); id., Quarantaine (Amsterdam, 1993); id., Niet verstaan (Amsterdam, 1995).

¹⁰⁷ C. Lacor, 'Van Anne Frank en Leedvermaak: Joods theaterwerk en de herinnering aan de Sjoa in Nederland', in Berg and Wallet (eds.), *Wie niet weg is, is gezien*, 175–87.

but the solution for Jews around the world. ¹⁰⁸ In many novels, however, Jewish culture was mainly a kind of blanket, whether warm or stifling, expressed through distinctive traditions, ways of speaking, and social codes. Post-war Dutch Jewish families were portrayed in books such as Marcel Möring's *Mendels erfenis* ('Mendel's Inheritance', 1990) and Frans Pointl's *Een kip die over de soep vloog* (1989; title story translated into English as 'The Chicken That Flew Over the Soup', 1994).

Translated literature reached new heights of popularity. Both Israeli writers and Jewish American authors such as Philip Roth, Saul Bellow, E. L. Doctorow, Nicole Krauss, and Jonathan Safran Foer were widely read by Dutch Jews and non-Jews alike. The leading Israeli authors Amos Oz, David Grossman, and A. B. Yehoshua had much of their work translated into Dutch, but many other authors—from Aharon Appelfeld to Nir Baram and from Yoram Kaniuk to Zeruya Shalev—also attracted great interest. Translators such as Shulamit Bamberger, Kees Meiling, Hilde Pach, and Ruben Verhasselt played an important role. ¹⁰⁹ Some translated books, such as *Exodus* by the American Leon Uris and Amos Oz's *A Tale of Love and Darkness*, had a great impact on public debate, especially because of the connections they drew between the Holocaust, the State of Israel, the attitude of 'the West', and the Arab–Israeli conflict. ¹¹⁰

The new wave of interest in Jews and Jewish culture also reached the universities. The Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana had started to become a significant meeting place for Jewish scholars in the pre-war period. After the war, it maintained and expanded that role under the management of curators such as Leo (Lajb) Fuks, Adri Offenberg, and Emile Schrijver. In 1967 Fuks took the initiative of establishing the *Studia Rosenthaliana*, which became the premier journal of the history and culture of the Jews in the Netherlands. At the University of Amsterdam, a separate Hebrew and Jewish studies department was instituted, offering a full academic programme of education for those who wished to specialize in the field. This department, also known as the Juda Palache Institute, was successively headed by Maas Boertien, Niek van Uchelen, and Irene Zwiep. In 1989 an endowed chair devoted to the history and culture of contemporary Jewry was established at the same university and held by Rena Fuks-Mansfeld, Wout van Bekkum, and Evelien Gans successively. In that capacity, they gave lecture courses and did research. An endowed chair in Yiddish was held by Shlomo Berger beginning in 2005. Judaism, Hebrew, and Jewish studies also had a long-term institutional place in

¹⁰⁸ D. Wertheim, 'Hypotheek op een ongedekte cheque: De betekenis van Israël voor de Nederlandsjoodse schrijvers Abel Herzberg, Leon de Winter en Arnon Grunberg', in Berg and Wallet (eds.), *Wie niet weg* is, is gezien, 135–47.

¹⁰⁹ H. and L. Blok and B. Wallet (eds.), Bibliografie over het Jodendom en Israël voor het Nederlandse taalgebied, 1992–2006 (Leuven, 2007), 175–274.

¹¹¹ I. E. Zwiep et al. (eds.), Omnia in Eo: Studies on Jewish Books and Libraries in Honour of Adri Offenberg, Celebrating the 125th Anniversary of the Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana in Amsterdam (= StR 38/39) (Leuven, 2006).

universities in Leiden, Utrecht, Groningen, Kampen, and Nijmegen, and at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam.¹¹²

In Israel, a Centre for Research on Dutch Jewry was founded at the Hebrew University in 1968 on the initiative of Jozeph Michman (formerly Melkman), and it regularly organized conferences on Dutch Jewish history. The process involved discussions with the Commissie voor de Geschiedenis (en Cultuur) van de Joden in Nederland (Committee for the History (and Culture) of the Jews in the Netherlands) of the Koninklijke Nederlandse Academie voor Wetenschappen (Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences; KNAW), in which the leading Dutch historians in the field of the history of the Jews were consistently represented. The Leiden professor Ivo Schöffer played a leading role in that committee, which also organized conferences, including a series alternating with the ones in Israel, and colloquia. Eventually, both the Committee and the endowed chairs at the University of Amsterdam fell under the Menasseh ben Israel Institute, founded in 1996, a cooperative initiative of the Jewish Historical Museum and the University of Amsterdam. Under the management of the successive directors Emile Schrijver and David Wertheim, this Institute evolved into a stable factor in the Jewish academic infrastructure. 113

Cultural Judaism found expression not only in a range of artistic creations and courses of academic study, but also in the growth of a new network of Jewish cultural initiatives, clubs, and organizations, most on a fairly small scale. Their diversity, flexibility, and frequent single-issue focus reflected the transformation of the Jewish landscape. Jewish cafés, such as Gotspe on Zeedijk in Amsterdam in the 1970s, provided casual meeting places for adolescent and young adult Jews. From 1979 to 2002 Jewish homosexuals could find each other at Sjalhomo, which not only offered a pleasant meeting place but also had a double agenda. On the gay scene, especially in the LGBT organization COC, it aimed to draw attention to Jewish identity; meanwhile, in the Jewish community, it fought for greater acceptance of homosexuality. From 1983 to 1999, one form of left-wing Jewish engagement was a movement centred on *Blanes* magazine.

Alongside the 'traditional' themes of the Holocaust and the State of Israel, cultural Judaism—both 'high' and 'low' culture—came to serve as a Jewish contribution to the public domain. For example, the Jewish humourist Max Tailleur, who performed in his cabaret club De Doofpot from 1952 onwards, was very popular. He told his Jewish jokes not only onstage but also in books, on records, and on a premium-rate telephone line, the *Geinlijn*. 114

¹¹² R. Fontaine, E. Schrijver, and I. Zwiep (eds.), *De toekomst van de joodse studies in Nederland* (Amsterdam, 2000); A. van der Heide, 'De studie van het Jodendom in Nederland: Verleden, heden, toekomst', *StR* 17 (1983), 41–57, 177–209; B. Wallet, *De stand van de joodse studies in Nederland*, 1990–2008 (Amsterdam, 2008).

A. van der Heide, 'De studie van het jodendom in Nederland: Het recente verleden', in Wallet (ed.), De stand van de joodse studies, 11–19.
 J. Luitzen, Max Tailleur: Mijn leven was geen mop (Amsterdam, 2010).

One noteworthy phenomenon was the growing perception of the Amsterdam football club Ajax as a 'Jewish club'. This was not just because of the Jewish players, such as Bennie Muller and Sjaak Swart, but also owing to the role of administrators such as Jaap and Michael van Praag, Michael Kinsbergen, and Uri Coronel. Moreover, this phenomenon was closely connected to the broader social context, in which the culture of memory surrounding the Holocaust led to the re-evaluation of Amsterdam's Jewish past and present. Supporters of Ajax began to use Jewish and Israeli symbols as informal markers of their club identity, and supporters of rival football clubs responded with antisemitic songs and slogans. 'Football antisemitism' presented managers in the sports world, public authorities, and the police with the challenge of combating this particular variety of discrimination. ¹¹⁵

Amsterdam had a high profile as a 'Jewish city'. By this stage, the Jewish community there had completed a process begun well before the Second World War, leaving the traditional Jewish neighbourhoods mostly for Amsterdam-Zuid and the new district of Buitenveldert, which became the focal points of Jewish life. The kosher infrastructure, which included the Theeboom bakery, Quiros butcher shop, Sal Meijer sandwich shop, and Mouwes grocery, remained in its old location in Jodenbreestraat, Nieuwmarkt, and Utrechtsestraat for a relatively long time, but eventually followed the customers to Zuid and Buitenveldert. The Kastelenstraat became the 'new Jodenbreestraat', with a cluster of kosher shops, restaurants, and cafés. Jewish life also developed rapidly in the neighbouring town of Amstelveen, because not only Jews from Amsterdam but also relatively many from outside the city moved there to be closer to Jewish schools, kosher shops, and synagogues. Buitenveldert and Amstelveen became the new centre of Jewish life, a change clearly signalled around 1980 by the presence of Orthodox and Reform synagogues, the Jewish elementary school Rosj Pina, the secondary school Maimonides Lyceum, and the combined school Cheider. These organizations were followed by the retirement home Beth Shalom and, later, by the Sinai Centrum. 116

Although Jews had become a small minority in the city, they were highly visible, partly because of the striking fact that many post-war Amsterdam mayors were Jews: Ivo Samkalden (1967–77), Wim Polak (1977–83), Ed van Thijn (1983–94), Job Cohen (2001–10), and Eberhard van der Laan (2010–17; PLATE 74). Moreover, Lodewijk Asscher was the interim and then the acting mayor for a brief period in 2010. This was not a deliberate policy, but neither was it a complete coincidence. The city, the municipal council, and the dominant Partij van de Arbeid all attached importance to the links

¹¹⁵ S. Kuper, *Ajax, de Joden, Nederland* (Amsterdam, 2000); M. van Praag and A. van Liempt, *Jaap & Max: Het verhaal van de broers Van Praag* (Amsterdam, 2011); for antisemitism in football, see E. Gans, "Hamas, Hamas, All the Jews to the Gas": The History and Significance of an Antisemitic Slogan in the Netherlands, 1945–2010', in G. Jikeli and J. Allouche-Benayoun (eds.), *Perceptions of the Holocaust in Europe and Muslim Communities: Sources, Comparisons and Educational Challenges* (Dordrecht, 2013), 85–103; E. Gans, "The Jew" in Football: To Kick around or to Embrace', in Ensel and Gans (eds.), *The Holocaust, Israel and 'the Jew'*, 287–314.

¹¹⁶ Wallet, Van Trigt, and Polak, *Die ons heeft laten leven*, 52–85, 142–66.

between Amsterdam, the Jewish community, and the Jewish past. Besides the Jewish mayors, there were also numerous Jewish aldermen and city councillors, including some not affiliated with the PvdA. In many cases, their Jewish identity had little bearing on their political choices, sometimes to the frustration of the Jewish organizations in Amsterdam that were counting on their support. 117

Politicians with some sort of Jewish background were a familiar phenomenon not only in Amsterdam but also in national politics, but they showed very different degrees of engagement with their Jewish identity. Jews participated in all levels of politics, usually but not always as members of left-wing, liberal, and social liberal parties. Postwar cabinet members with a Jewish background included Hedy d'Ancona, Lodewijk Asscher, Sidney James van den Bergh, Ernst Hirsch Ballin, Julius Christiaan van Oven, Arie Pais, Carel H. F. Polak, Max Rood, Uri Rosenthal, Ivo Samkalden, and Ed van Thijn. Job Cohen, Paul de Groot, Jacques Wallage, and Harry Wijnschenk were parliamentary party leaders, while Frans Weisglas rose to the position of president of the House of Representatives (Tweede Kamer). There were also many Jewish members of both houses of Parliament.

The extent to which Judaism, Jewish identity, and Israel influenced one's personal identity, professional activities, and public image was a fraught issue not only for Jewish politicians but also for Jews in the media. Ido de Haan shed light on the dilemmas surrounding prominent Jews of this kind, pointing out that Jewish politicians and journalists played very different roles in public debate and could hardly be treated as if they all represented a single perspective. Journalists such as Sonja Barend, Jaap van Meekren, Clairy Polak, and Marga van Praag often presented themselves as neutral 'bringers of news', while Frits Barend, Ischa Meijer, Renate Rubinstein, and Meyer Sluyser had no compunction about giving their Jewish identity an emphatic role. The importance attached to their Jewish identity by the public was strongly tied to the public religion that had formed in the 'multicultural period' around the wartime persecution of the Jews. 118

Jewish-Christian Dialogue

Jewish-Christian dialogue had been initiated earlier, in the decades immediately following the Second World War. Although the situation remained asymmetrical, with large Christian churches facing a small and divided Jewish community, forms of closer contact did emerge. The Catholic Church and the major Protestant churches, with the Dutch Reformed Church (Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk) and the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland) leading the way, all had divisions that worked to promote better understanding of Jews, Judaism, and Israel in

¹¹⁷ H. Logtenberg and M. Wiegman, Job Cohen: Burgemeester van Nederland (Amsterdam, 2010).

¹¹⁸ I. de Haan, 'Prominent jodendom: Af- en aanwezigheid van joden in het naoorlogse Nederland', in Berg and Wallet (eds.), *Wie niet weg is, is gezien*, 43–54.

their communities. In 1968 the liberal rabbi Yehuda Aschkenasy began teaching at the Katholieke Theologische Hogescholen (Catholic Theological Universities) in Amsterdam and Utrecht; he attracted a large circle of students, partly overlapping with the Leerhuisbeweging (Study Group Movement), in which Jews, Catholics, Protestants, and humanists worked together to disseminate Jewish knowledge. Aschkenasy's work was institutionalized in 1972 in the B. Folkertsmastichting voor Talmudica (B. Folkertsma Foundation for Talmudic Studies), later renamed Pardes, which offered courses and lectures and published the journal *Tenachon*. 119

In the Dutch Reformed Church, the policy document *Israel: Land, volk en staat* ('Israel: Country, People, and State') was adopted in 1970; the authors were leading theologians such as Hendrikus Berkhof and Ellen Flesseman-van Leer. It provided theological foundations for Christian solidarity with the Jewish people and the State of Israel. In the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, even the church order was amended in 1995 to include an article proclaiming that the church was 'irrevocably linked' to Israel. When the Protestant Church in the Netherlands (Protestantse Kerk in Nederland) was formed by the merger of the two denominations (along with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Netherlands/Evangelisch-Lutherse Kerk in Nederland), that article was adopted anew, although it met with some resistance, especially for its political dimension. Over the first decade of the twenty-first century, the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians gave rise to two increasingly distinct wings, which declared their solidarity with Israel and the Palestinians respectively. Church administrators had to put great effort into building bridges between these different camps.

The many Jewish–Christian dialogue projects found an institutional home in 1981, when the Overlegorgaan Joden en Christenen (Consultative Body for Jews and Christians; OJEC) was founded. The Jewish participants were not all from the Reform movement; the NIK also sent representatives. Among Orthodox Jews, there was a growing conviction that dialogue could lead to gains, especially in the struggle against antisemitism and their efforts to correct misconceptions about Judaism among Christian theologians. Hardly any substantive theological discussion came out of this dialogue, and that was not regarded as one of the main objectives. The OJEC responded publicly to public manifestations of antisemitism, developed educational materials about Judaism for Christians, and organized interfaith meetings and workshops. 120

While Jewish-Christian relations improved considerably in the general climate of the multicultural period and through the efforts of the pioneers of interfaith dialogue, some of the underlying tension surfaced in 1985, when Pope John Paul II visited the

¹¹⁹ G. J. van Klinken, Opvattingen in de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland over het Jodendom, 1896–1970 (Kampen, 1996), 407–611; T. van Schaik, Vertrouwde vreemden: Betrekkingen tussen katholieken en joden in Nederland 1930–1990 (Baarn, 1992); M. Poorthuis and T. Salemink, Op zoek naar de blauwe ruiter: Sophie van Leer, een leven tussen avant-garde, jodendom en christendom (1892–1953) (Nijmegen, 2000), 307–488.

¹²⁰ G. van Klinken, Christelijke stemmen over het jodendom: Zestig jaar Interkerkelijk Contact Israël (ICI), 1946–2006 (Delft, 2009), 115–18.

Netherlands. The pope was eager to meet with the country's Jewish community during his visit. Although there was much disagreement among Dutch Jews, the final decision was not to accept his invitation, for two reasons. Israel was still awaiting recognition from the Holy See, as well as an explicit *mea culpa* for Christian antisemitism. When the Vatican recognized Israel in 1993, it removed what had been a major obstacle to the Jewish–Catholic conversation in the Netherlands and elsewhere.

Some Christian groups, especially in the orthodox Protestant camp, developed an overt fascination and identification with the State of Israel, partly under the influence of the role ascribed to Jews and the State of Israel in American evangelical publications and by the Evangelische Omroep (Evangelical Broadcasting Corporation) in the Netherlands. This resulted in an increasingly close-knit organization of Christian supporters of Israel. From 1974 to 1976, the Israel Comité Nederland (Dutch Israel Committee; ICN) used political action, demonstrations, and fundraising campaigns to support Jewish causes. From 1980 onwards, the organization Christians for Israel kept up the fight, under the leadership of the businessman Karel van Oordt. Combining demonstrations of solidarity with a Christian theological agenda opposing what it called 'replacement theology' (vervangingsleer), it grew into a large and influential pro-Israel organization.

Jews in the Secular Netherlands

Social Position

Around the turn of the century, a reorientation of Dutch society made multiculturalism a less influential ideal. There were various reasons for this shift. First of all, the attack on the Twin Towers in New York on 11 September 2001 had had a huge impact on public debate in the Netherlands. It marked the beginning of a new period, in which the relative calm of the 1990s gave way to a new large-scale geopolitical conflict between 'the West' and radical Islam. The 'War on Terror' propagated by the American president, George W. Bush, had profound effects on the self-image of Americans and Europeans. Second, Dutch politics was shaken by the so-called Fortuyn revolt, instigated by Pim Fortuyn, who drew a connection between social and integration problems in ageing urban districts and the War on Terror. Before then, the VVD leader Frits Bolkestein and public intellectual Paul Scheffer had sounded critical notes about the multicultural ideal, but Fortuyn vigorously opposed it. He argued that the multicultural society had failed, creating parallel worlds that all too often had no shared moral values. The assassination of Fortuyn in 2002 marked a farewell to the multicultural ideal; almost all the major political parties, including the ones that had championed it in the preceding decades, began to distance themselves from it. Across the political spectrum, there was a shared conviction that the integration of new minorities had failed, and that there was a need to reform the integration process. 121

¹²¹ M. Kleijwegt and M. van Weezel, *Het land van haat en nijd: Hoe Nederland radicaal veranderde* (Amsterdam, 2006); P. Schnabel (ed.), *De multiculturele illusie* (Utrecht, 2000).

Against that background, Dutch society was again compelled to wonder about the true meaning of Dutch identity. If minorities were required to integrate, then shouldn't it be clear what exactly they were supposed to become part of? An intense debate ensued, in which Dutch history, values, and standards all came under scrutiny. There were two focal points of debate. First, the idea of national identity was pitted against strong globalizing tendencies, which found expression in a range of cultural and political developments. A 'canon', or core curriculum, of Dutch history was presented in 2006 for use in education, around the same time as a failed attempt to establish a national historical museum. New manifestations of Dutch nationalism were in evidence in the political domain, in the form of both new parties and changes within established parties. Secondly, there were signs of the gradual emergence of what could become a new widely shared public morality and a related model for society. The Second World War was still regarded as an important event but no longer universally recognized as the ultimate moral benchmark. While appeals to wartime experience had previously carried great weight, they could now be rapidly dismissed with a reference to Godwin's law. Growing emphasis was placed on certain results of the cultural revolution of the 1960s, which had philosophical roots going back to what Jonathan Israel has called the Radical Enlightenment. While in the repillarized and multicultural periods, the prevailing vision of society had included communities as a fundamental part, increasingly primacy was accorded to individual rights. This discourse of individual rights found expression in central concepts such as equality regardless of gender, race, or sexual orientation. As part of the same trend, increasing attention was paid to the rights of children and animals. These new emphases could be found throughout the Dutch political landscape, and they led to new legislative processes, changes in integration policy, and social debate. 122

This new morality seemed to become the distinguishing feature of a 'secular society', in which most of the population had little or no affiliation with any organized religion, and expressions of religious belief in the public domain were no longer accepted as normal. Religious communities were felt to have a legitimate place in society, but they were expected to conform to the dominant values and standards. When religious minorities—such as orthodox strains of Christianity, Islam, and Judaism—did not meet this expectation, there was clear friction with the new majority culture. 123

For Dutch Jews, these social shifts had various consequences. Their central role in

¹²² D. Houtman and J. W. Duyvendak, 'Boerka's, boerkini's en belastingcenten: Culturele en politieke polarisatie in een post-christelijke samenleving', in W. Schinkel et al. (eds.), *Polarisatie: Bedreigend en verrijkend* (Amsterdam, 2009), 102–19; E. Sengers and T. Sunier, *Religious Newcomers and the Nation State: Political Culture and Organized Religion in France and the Netherlands* (Delft, 2010).

¹²³ S. J. Vellenga, 'Religieuze orthodoxie als bedreiging: Verschuivingen in het publieke debat', *Tijdschrift voor Religie, Recht en Beleid*, 2/2 (2011), 7–22; id., 'Religieuze tolerantie op haar retour? Hete discussies, kalme reacties en bedenkelijke effecten', *Religie & Samenleving*, 7/1 (2012), 110–26; O. Verkaaik, *Ritueel burgerschap: Een essay over nationalisme en secularisme in Nederland* (Amsterdam, 2009).

society, which was linked to the morality of the Second World War, gradually slipped away. Their particular historical background was not forgotten, but was no longer decisive. Furthermore, the debate on integration had two different effects. On the one hand, politicians pointed to individual Jews as examples of successful integration and held up Jewish history, in this respect, as a model for people from other, more recent minorities. Jews were praised not so much for the qualities that set them apart but for their adaptability and their role as exemplary Dutch citizens. On the other hand, the organized Jewish community, like other minorities, came to be seen mainly through a religious prism. Minorities were no longer viewed in cultural terms—as they had been in the context of multiculturalism—but from the perspective of the dichotomy between the secular and the religious. While the large majority of Dutch Jews defined themselves as cultural Jews, there was a growing tendency to perceive the community as a whole in religious terms. In a sense, this brought the Jewish community back to the old model from the repillarized period, but in a newly secular context. As a result, Jews—along with Muslims, and in some cases Orthodox Christians—faced questions and comments about religious customs and beliefs that were at odds with the new public morality. As individuals, Jews could be portrayed as model citizens, but the organized Jewish community was seen as problematic in some respects.

These changes were clearly in evidence in the public and political debate on ritual slaughter that took place in 2011. Marianne Thieme of the Partij voor de Dieren (Animal Rights Party; PvdD) introduced a bill to prohibit the ritual slaughter of fully conscious animals by Jews and Muslims for consumption as food. There had been calls for such measures in Dutch society for quite some time, especially from animal rights activists and organizations, as well as from extreme right-wing parties and movements. Both of these groups were small, however, and such a prohibition was not consistent with the public morality of the repillarized or multicultural period. But now the situation had changed radically. As an explicitly religious practice, ritual slaughter had become difficult to reconcile with a public morality defined in secular terms, especially since it also infringed on animal rights. Four parties that had previously defended ritual slaughter as a crown jewel of multiculturalism—VVD, PvdA, D66, and GroenLinks (Green Left)—supported the ban. Only the confessional parties still supported the practice in the House of Representatives. Despite a majority in the lower house in favour of a prohibition, the bill was voted down in the Senate after a stormy and emotional public debate, for reasons of freedom of religion. This debate is nonetheless a clear illustration of the shifts that had occurred. Other Jewish and Muslim practices, such as religious circumcision of boys, also came under fire as violations of children's rights. Although the Koninklijk Nederlands Medisch Genootschap (Royal Dutch Medical Society; KNMG) actively discourages circumcision, and the discussion flares up regularly, there has thus far been no parliamentary debate on the issue. 124

¹²⁴ L. van de Kamp, Dagboek van een verdoofd rabbijn: Persoonlijke notities bij een politieke aardverschuiving

The repositioning of the Jewish community altered the dynamics of its relationship with the similarly redefined Muslim minority. Previously, Jews had put intense effort into the struggle against racism and discrimination, but within an ethnic and cultural paradigm. For the first time, Islam became a factor in this struggle, not only in general public debate but also within the Jewish community. Two parallel processes could be observed. On the one hand, Jews identified mainly with mainstream Dutch society, and they too argued that there was a need for better integration and forms of assimilation among Muslims. A small segment of the community even threw their weight behind the most outspoken voice in the debate, Geert Wilders's right-wing populist Partij voor de Vrijheid (Freedom Party; PvdV). On the other hand, many Dutch Jews felt some affinity with the Muslim community as a related minority. This sense of affinity was made explicit by the author Robert Vuijsje, among others. Although the debate on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was a recurring source of tension, new consultative structures were put in place to encourage encounters and alliances between Jews and Muslims. From 2006 onwards, the Joods-Marokkaans Netwerk Amsterdam (Amsterdam Jewish–Moroccan Network; JMNA) was officially supported by the city of Amsterdam, and it set out an ambitious agenda. But infighting brought its work to a premature end in 2014. That same year, the bottom-up initiative Salaam Shalom took up the torch, organizing informal meetings between Jews and Muslims. 125

Diversity

The number of Jews in the Netherlands remained remarkably stable, despite what many had expected in the early post-war years (see Table 9.1). In absolute terms, the total number of Dutch Jews fluctuated around 35,000, although there was a growing group alongside them who were not Jewish according to the Orthodox (halakhic) definition, but self-identified as Jewish by other definitions. That ambiguity became a hallmark of post-war Jewish life. Before 1940 there had been little difference between external definitions and self-definitions of Jewish identity, and the tallies kept by the Jewish denominations had largely corresponded to public census figures. After 1945 the two counts increasingly diverged. Jewish identity was increasingly disconnected from religion, and therefore from religious denominations, a process that had begun before the war. There was also a group of Jews who, partly against the backdrop of the Second World War, no longer wanted to be registered as Jews either with the public authorities or with a religious denomination. Finally, the number of mixed marriages rose, as did the number of children of such marriages; this made the boundaries of

(Zoetermeer, 2012); M. Valenta, 'Pluralistic Democracy or Scientistic Monocracy? Debating Ritual Slaughter', Erasmus Law Review, 5/1 (2012), 27–41; B. Wallet, 'Ritueel slachten en godsdienstvrijheid in een seculiere samenleving', Religie & Samenleving, 7/2 (2012), 166–83.

¹²⁵ Ensel, *Haatspraak: Antisemitisme*, 321–8; S. Roggeveen, S. J. Vellenga, and G. A. Wiegers, 'Cooperation in Turbulent Times: Strategies of Jews and Muslims in Amsterdam', *Islam and Christian–Muslim Relations*, 28 (2017), 355–79.

Table 9.1 The number of Jews in the Netherlands, 1947–2010			
Year	Number	Source	Definition
1947	14,346	Census	Members of Jewish denominations (self-reported)
1954	23,723	NIK membership rolls	All halakhic Ashkenazi Jews, minus those who had requested removal of their names from the NIK membership rolls
1960	14,503	Census	Members of Jewish denominations (self-reported)
1966	29,675	NIK membership rolls and civil registry	Halakhic (see 1954)
2000	30,072/43,305	Van Solinge/De Vries survey	Halakhic plus children of Jewish fathers
2010	37,500/52,600	Van Solinge/Van Praag survey	Halakhic plus children of Jewish fathers
Source: H. van Solinge and M. de Vries (eds.), <i>De joden in Nederland anno 2000: Demografisch profiel en binding aan het jodendom</i> (Amsterdam, 2001), 31; H. van Solinge and C. van Praag, <i>De joden in Nederland anno 2009: Continuiteit en verandering</i> (Diemen, 2010), 2.			

Jewish life highly fluid. Who did and did not belong in the Jewish community became a key question for many Jewish organizations, from the Zionist youth movement to the Jewish private schools. In 1988 the Supreme Court decided in a judgement regarding admission to the Maimonides Lyceum that Jewish administrative boards could decide for themselves on their admissions policies and their definitions of Jewish identity. This implied that there would henceforth be a variety of Jewish communities in the Netherlands, partly overlapping, but also practising forms of exclusion in some cases.

The total number of Jews in the Netherlands remained fairly stable for various reasons. There was a high level of emigration to the United States, Israel, Canada, Australia, and other destinations. But significant remigration also took place, as some emigrants found themselves unable to put down roots in their new homelands. Besides emigration, there was also immigration. 'New' Jews arrived in the Netherlands in several waves. Immediately after the Second World War, approximately a thousand eastern European Jewish 'displaced persons' were admitted to the Netherlands; some fairly soon emigrated onwards, but others became a permanent part of the community. After the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, several dozen Hungarian Jews fled to the Netherlands. As part of post-war decolonization, Jews from the Dutch East Indies / Indonesia also came to the Netherlands. Their migration marked the end of the Jewish life built up bit by bit in 'the East', where three to five thousand Dutch Jews had lived on the eve of the war. During the war, European Jews in the colony had initially been interned, along with other Europeans, by the Japanese. April 1943 saw the start of

¹²⁶ Berghuis, Geheel ontdaan van onbaatzuchtigheid, 59–60, 121.

an anti-Jewish campaign instigated by the Germans, which led to the internment of the non-European Baghdad Jews and the concentration of Jewish prisoners in a Jewish han (or 'section', from the Japanese). This wartime experience motivated many Dutch Jews to depart for the Netherlands soon after the mother country's liberation. Other Jews left the Dutch East Indies for the United States and Israel, where they even set up their own association—Tempo Dulu—in 1995. At the time of the decolonization of Surinam, around 1975, much of the long-established Portuguese Jewish and Ashkenazi community left the country for the United States, Israel, and the Netherlands. The nearly three hundred Dutch Jews who had fled to Surinam during the Second World War had left soon after 1945. After the 1975 exodus, a small Jewish community of about 200 remained. The Portuguese and Ashkenazi congregations merged, and in 2004 they left Orthodoxy behind for Reform Judaism. The same thing happened in Curaçao, where the two Sephardi congregations merged in 1964, becoming Reform. An Ashkenazi Orthodox congregation remained there, however: Shaarei Tsedek, the product of twentieth-century migration from eastern Europe. In total, there were around 300 Jews in the Netherlands Antilles in 2010. 127

The return of Dutch emigrants from Israel was frowned upon at first, but gradually accepted. Jews with 'Israel experience' ended up holding all sorts of positions in Jewish life. Even more surprising than this remigration was the arrival of Israelis in the Netherlands. Their number rose to almost 10,000 in the 1990s. They came to the country for work and for love, creating an informal network of their own that had few points of contact with the organized Jewish community. The same was true of the American, British, and Russian Jews who settled in the Netherlands temporarily or permanently, often for similar reasons. ¹²⁸

While in the early post-war period it still made sense to speak of 'the Jewish community', with some reservations, by this time it had become difficult. More than 80 per cent of Dutch Jews were 'unaffiliated' (ongebonden), meaning they did not belong to any Jewish denomination or other religious institution. A demographic survey administered for the JMW arrived at a total of 52,600 Jews in the Netherlands in 2009. This was according to a broad definition, which included children not only of Jewish mothers but also of Jewish fathers (vaderjoden, to use a term coined by the writer Andreas Burnier). ¹²⁹ If the Orthodox halakhic definition had been used, the total would have been 37,500. In both cases, it was clear that the majority of Jews were outside the traditional community structures. On closer examination, it was evident that these 'unaffiliated' Jews expressed their Jewish identity in all sorts of ways, but mainly in private or

¹²⁷ J.-M. Cohen (ed.), Joden in de Cariben: Vier eeuwen joodse geschiedenis in Suriname en Curaçao (Zutphen, 2015); D. M. Metz, R. E. Koe, and H. Berg (eds.), Selamat Sjabbat: De onbekende geschiedenis van de joden in Nederlands-Indië (Amsterdam, 2014).

¹²⁸ J. Almagor and C. Kooyman, *Israëli's in Nederland* (Amsterdam, 1996).

¹²⁹ E. Lockhorn, Andreas Burnier: Metselaar van de wereld (Amsterdam, 2015), 463–4.

in the family circle. They tended to make a personal selection of elements from the religious tradition, ranging from holidays to circumcision, as well as from expressions of Jewish culture and forms of connection to the community such as the commemoration of the Second World War and solidarity with the State of Israel.

The 20 per cent of Jews who did belong to institutions were equally diverse. The trend that had begun in the multicultural period was by this stage producing an exceptionally diverse and colourful religious landscape. The NIK remained the largest Jewish organization, with some 5,000 members in total. Because some of the more free-thinking members had left, the remaining membership was much more strictly Orthodox than the NIK had been for many decades. The Orthodox Ashkenazi congregations outside Amsterdam still had a highly unified character across the religious spectrum, acting as a central point for Jews in the region and offering not only regular synagogue services but also social and cultural activities. Many Dutch rabbis belonged to the Chabad movement, whose members were willing to move to places that were unattractive to other Orthodox rabbis because of the absence of an Orthodox infrastructure. Starting in 2008, Binyomin Jacobs, who lived in the centrally located city of Amersfoort, acted as the chief rabbi for the Netherlands outside the Randstad. By that time, he had already been acting in more or less that role for years, although at first as a regular rabbi and later as head rabbi, a status between that of rabbi and chief rabbi. Religious diversity was most clearly visible in the NIHS in Amsterdam. A change in its organizational structure in 2012 gave every synagogue community the right to decide on its own identity—within the bounds of Orthodoxy, of course. The result was that alongside 'traditional' Dutch Jewish synagogues, such as the Jacob Obrechtstraatsynagoge and the Gerard Dousynagoge, the Amsterdam Modern Orthodox Shul (AMOS) also became part of the NIHS umbrella organization. But the ultra-Orthodox congregation Machzikei Touroh, organized around the Beis Hamedrash, decided to remain independent from it. The PIG went on offering its traditional services in the Portuguese Synagogue, maintaining the ancient Portuguese nusah (religious and musical tradition). The daughter community in Amstelveen had the opportunity to make a place for other Sephardi traditions as well—those of Moroccan and Yemenite Jews. An independent Portuguese Jewish initiative, the Bendigamos congregation, attracted mainly young Jews, without compromising the traditional PIG liturgy.

While Orthodoxy had become a variegated landscape by this point, the diversity on the progressive side was if anything even greater. The ten Reform Jewish congregations had acquired a stable place and expanded their infrastructure. From 2002 onwards, the Levisson Instituut supplied the Reform community with well-educated rabbis, cantors, and teachers. One striking change is the rise of female Reform rabbis, who now make up the majority of the denomination's rabbinate. Some of them are active mainly with the denomination, but Tamarah Benima—a former editor-inchief of the *NIW* and columnist for various newspapers—and Marianne van Praag also

acted as its external face, representing the Reform Jewish perspective in public debate (PLATE 78). The Amsterdam LJG grew steadily and marked that growth by having an impressive new synagogue built in 2010. To the left of the LJG, congregations formed that were associated with the international Jewish Renewal and Reconstructionist Judaism movements. In 1995 the Beit Ha'Chidush congregation was formed in the slipstream of the Gay Games; LGBTQ+ emancipation, Jewish spirituality, and accessibility characterized this new congregation from the start, and in 2005 it appointed the first female rabbi in the Netherlands, Elisa Klapheck. The Open Joodse Gemeente (Open Jewish Congregation) Klal Israël was established in Delft. An independent Jewish congregation formed around the dike synagogue in Sliedrecht, which had become a museum. The spectrum between Orthodoxy and Reform Judaism was filled by two Conservative or Masorti congregations in Weesp and Deventer.

However modest the size of the Jewish Netherlands, its religious and cultural diversity fully reflected the pattern seen on an international scale. Instead of a community with a strong, unified identity, in which moderate Orthodoxy and Dutch nationalism went hand in hand, there was now a multiplicity of Jewish communities, each embedded in international networks. While communities had some overlap, the separation between them (whether overt or implicit) was just as significant. Only at rare moments was the breadth of the Jewish Netherlands visible; for example, during the Yom Hashoah memorial ceremonies at the Hollandsche Schouwburg. For the rest of the year, Dutch Jewry looked much more like a colourful assortment of 52,600 individual Jews with very disparate and conflicting opinions and approaches to their Jewish identities, who clustered, to a modest degree, into Jewish denominations and movements with a distinctly international Jewish character.

The CJO and Restoration of Legal Rights

Yet by this time there was an umbrella organization that acted as the representative of all 52,600 Dutch Jews. Following a community memorial service in the presence of Prince Claus and Crown Prince Willem-Alexander in the Portuguese Synagogue in Amsterdam in 1995 to mark the fiftieth anniversary of Dutch liberation (PLATE 76), at which tensions between the participating groups ran high, the search began for an institutional solution. This led, two years later, to the founding of the Centraal Joods Overleg Externe Belangen (Central Jewish Council for External Interests; CJO), on which the three Jewish denominations, the JMW, and CIDI worked together on the public and political representation of the Jewish community. Because religion was explicitly excluded from the organization's mission, the Orthodox Va'ad HaRabbanim (board of rabbis) assented to it. Although only Jewish organizations participated in the CJO, a later legal dispute confirmed the CJO's claim that it was entitled to speak on behalf of all Dutch Jews, including the non-organized ones. 130

¹³⁰ Sanders, 'Samenwerken—of niet'.

The CJO arrived on the scene just in time; only days after it was founded, a new round of restoration of legal rights began. This was because American Jewish organizations, backed by the American government, had sued Swiss banks, accusing them of having surreptitiously added many millions of dollars from the estates of murdered Jews to their own assets. In the wake of this lawsuit, the spotlight turned to other banks and insurance companies, including Dutch ones such as Aegon. Moreover, in 1997 a student in an Amsterdam canal house found the cards on which the 'robber bank' of Lippmann & Rosenthal (LiRo) had kept its records. They made it clear that the whereabouts of some objects stolen from Jews remained unknown. In the ensuing legal proceedings, the CJO represented the Dutch Jews.

It is important to see the second round of the restoration of legal rights against the backdrop of a changing perspective on the first round, which had taken place in the 1940s and 1950s. From the vantage point of 1990 that earlier round was described as formalistic and bureaucratic, and it was acknowledged that the primary focus had been on getting the Netherlands back on its feet. That insight necessitated another good look at whether any mistakes had been made in the first round and whether the Jews had suffered any injustice. That was a matter for the Dutch government especially the finance ministry, headed by Gerrit Zalm. But there were also issues relating to banks, insurance companies, the securities trade, and art objects and other looted possessions. In all these areas, the public authorities took on a coordinating role. A number of committees were established to advise the government and the parties involved. The Van Kemenade Committee, also known as the Contactgroep Tegoeden Tweede Wereldoorlog (Second World War Assets Contact Group), focused on government policy and the finance ministry; that committee then asked the Scholten Committee, also known as the Begeleidingscommissie Onderzoek Financiële Tegoeden Tweede Wereldoorlog (Committee Investigating Financial Assets Held in the Netherlands) to take charge of the investigation of the banks and insurance companies. The Kordes Committee analysed and settled the LiRo affair, while the Ekkart Committee issued recommendations on looted Jewish cultural heritage, including looted art. 131

In 1998–9, it was concluded that most of the financial assets had been disbursed in the arduous first round of restoration of rights, but that in addition to a form of compensation for the approach taken then, there were also Jewish assets, financial or otherwise, in specific sectors and areas that had not yet been released to their rightful owners. Although the CJO carried out the negotiations on behalf of the Jewish community, the World Jewish Congress (WJC) also wished to be involved as the repre-

131 Grüter, Strijd om gerechtigheid, 133–259. The reports of these committees, particularly the appendices, are full of valuable analysis, historical and otherwise: Archieven, Tastbare goederen, Claims: Tweede rapport Commissie van onderzoek Liro-archieven (Kordes Committee) (The Hague, 1998); Eindrapport van de Begeleidingscommissie onderzoek financiële tegoeden WO-II in Nederland, 2 vols. (final report of the Scholten Committee) (Leiden, 1999); Eindrapport van de Contactgroep Tegoeden WOII (Van Kemenade Committee) (Amsterdam, 2000).

sentative of the international Jewish community. The WJC took a more adversarial stance and initially believed that the Dutch Jews were letting themselves be taken advantage of. The CJO preferred the typically Dutch 'polder model' of negotiating with all the parties involved and working towards a solution they all supported, and hoped to avoid legal proceedings. The CJO and the Dutch authorities finally reached an agreement in 2000, following a settlement with the Verbond van Verzekeraars (Dutch Association of Insurers) a year earlier. The result was that €346.8 million in restitution and compensation was paid by the public authorities, insurance companies, banks, and the securities trade and managed by two Maror Foundations: the Stichting Individuele Maror-gelden (Individual Maror Funds Foundation) for payments to survivors of the war and their surviving family members, and the Stichting Maror-gelden Overheid (Public Maror Funds Foundation), for payments in support of Jewish community life. The name Maror was both an acronym for *morele aansprakelijkheid roof en rechtsherstel* ('moral accountability for looting and the restoration of legal rights') and an allusion to the bitter herb eaten at the Passover seder. ¹³²

The Culture of Memory and the Second World War

One of the first initiatives supported with the funds restored was the historian Isaac Lipschits's project of constructing a digital monument to all the murdered Jews in the Netherlands. This project, which was initially under the management of the International Institute for Social History (IISH) but was later transferred to the Jewish Historical Museum, was an expression of a change in the culture of memory surrounding the Holocaust. There was much less thinking in collective terms—'the Jews' or 'the Dutch collaborators'—and new interest in individual perspectives. Lipschits responded to this shift by creating a web page for each murdered Jew, with address information and dates of birth and death, as well as space to add photographs, documents, and memories. ¹³³

The same emphasis on individuals could be observed in connection with physical monuments. From the 1970s onwards, monuments to murdered Jewish communities had been erected throughout the Netherlands, often in central locations. Alongside this collective approach, a new initiative arose to install *Stolpersteine* (a German term meaning 'stumbling stones'; Dutch: *struikelstenen*), following the example of the German artist Gunther Demnig. These are small bronze plaques in the form of paving stones, bearing the names of murdered Jews, installed in the pavement in front of the last place where they lived by choice. By now, thousands of these stones have been installed throughout the Netherlands. Earlier, in 1992, a wall had been erected in the Holland-sche Schouwburg with the family names of the murdered Dutch Jews. But that was not enough for the Nederlands Auschwitz Comité (Dutch Auschwitz Committee), which

had a growing support base after the Cold War ended. Starting in 2014, under the leadership of its president Jacques Grishaver, the committee successfully agitated for a memorial bearing the names of all the victims of the Holocaust from the Netherlands.¹³⁴

Running in parallel with the personalization of the perspective on the war was a new interest in the last survivors. They were seen as 'witnesses', who could still tell the story of what had happened from personal experience. Numerous educational projects recruited these 'witnesses' to tell children and young adults about life during the war. A large-scale effort to collect as many witness testimonies as possible was mounted in the 1990s on the initiative of the filmmaker Steven Spielberg. Survivors around the world were interviewed, and the videos of those conversations were stored in a large digital archive, forming a collective memory that was intended for educational projects but also began to attract the attention of academic researchers. The database of the USC Shoah Foundation can be consulted at different locations worldwide, among which is the Jewish Historical Museum in Amsterdam. Many dozens of Jews of Dutch origin contributed to this project in the Netherlands, Israel, the United States, and elsewhere.

In the twenty-first century, the public memorial ceremony on 4 May became a topic of considerable debate. The main question was who was actually being commemorated on that date. The official words of the ceremony referred to all Dutch victims of the Second World War and subsequent conflicts. In the multicultural period, great emphasis had been placed on the Jewish victims. New initiatives sought to commemorate an ever broader circle, including such groups as German Wehrmacht soldiers and Dutch people who had collaborated with the Nazis. There were fierce critical responses to this trend from Dutch Jews. Some, such as Rosanne Hertzberger, a columnist for the daily newspaper NRC Handelsblad, said they could no longer reconcile themselves to the public ceremonies and preferred to commemorate the victims of the Holocaust in their own Jewish circles. The Nationaal Comité 4 en 5 Mei (National 4 and 5 May Committee), which organized the ceremonies, heeded this criticism and wrote a new text focusing more clearly on the resistance, Jews and other victims, soldiers, and civilians who had lost their lives in armed conflicts since the outbreak of the Second World War. Meanwhile the Yom Hashoah ceremony for Jews had grown since the 1960s into a broadly supported memorial event in the Hollandsche Schouwburg. This was one of the few occasions on which all the segments of Dutch Jewry came together as a 'community of remembrance'. By this time International Holocaust Memorial Day—on 27 January, the day of the liberation of Auschwitz—had gained a foothold in the Netherlands, but with an emphasis on Dutch society more generally.

¹³⁴ M. Bijl, Nooit meer Auschwitz! Het Nederlands Auschwitz Comité, 1956–1996 (Bussum, 1997).

Israel and Antisemitism

The nearly automatic solidarity with the State of Israel across the political spectrum for much of the multicultural period had faded by this stage. Israel's right to exist remained unquestioned, but there were disparate views on its political policies, especially towards the Palestinians. Left-wing and progressive parties had become especially critical, an attitude that was reinforced when the right-wing populist PVV party began exploiting the theme of Israel in connection with its own anti-Islam agenda. 135

Dutch Jews, too, had a diverse array of opinions on Israeli policy. While the debate had long remained primarily within the community, and organizations such as the NZB/FNZ and CIDI presented a unified front to the outside world, the foundation of Een Ander Joods Geluid (A Different Jewish Voice; EAJG) put an end to that. The EAJG took an openly critical stance towards the dominant forces in Israeli politics, working together with pro-Palestinian activist groups ranging from the Nederlands Palestina Komitee to Gretta Duisenberg's Stop de Bezetting (Stop the Occupation) and Dries van Agt's The Rights Forum. This sparked a heated and polarized debate in Jewish circles—for instance, in an exchange of letters in the *NIW* between the cousins Harry de Winter (of the EAJG) and Leon de Winter. Meanwhile, pro-Israel organizations such as CIDI went on contributing vocally to public debate; this remained unchanged when Ronny Naftaniel was succeeded first by Esther Voet and then by Hanna Luden. 136

The second intifada in 2000 added a new dimension to the Israel debate. The minority who had come to be defined as Dutch Muslims were increasingly outspoken about this issue. These critics did not always clearly distinguish between contesting the policies of the State of Israel and questioning the right of the Jewish state to exist. The meaning of the term 'anti-Zionism' and its relationship to the concept of antisemitism became the topic of a fierce debate that produced little consensus. Groups engaged in Jewish–Muslim dialogue made great efforts to remain in conversation, but this could not prevent the occurrence of not only anti-Israeli but also antisemitic statements. These were made not exclusively by Dutch Muslims (mostly young), but also, to a significant extent, by *autochtonen*, Dutch people of European ancestry. In both cases, there was an explicit or implicit desire to dispense with the morality of the Second World War that had inspired solidarity with Israel among the previous generations in the Netherlands. 137

Since the early 1980s, the Jewish community had taken steps to protect high-profile Jewish buildings and events from Palestinian terrorist attacks. These efforts were coordinated by the Stichting Bij Leven en Welzijn (Alive and Well Foundation) and increased in significance in the twenty-first century, against the backdrop of the 'War

¹³⁵ D. J. Wertheim, 'Geert Wilders and the Nationalist-Populist Turn Toward the Jews in Europe', in id. (ed.), *The Jew as Legitimation*, 275–89.

¹³⁶ M. Anstadt (ed.), Een Ander Joods Geluid: Kritische opvattingen over Israël (Amsterdam, 2003).

¹³⁷ Ensel, *Haatspraak*, 177–328.

on Terror' and the rise of jihadism. Jewish targets such as synagogues, schools, and museums proved to be favourite targets of jihadist terrorists inspired or sent by the Islamic State (ISIL/ISIS) movement. After attacks on Jewish targets in France, Belgium, and Denmark, the Dutch government decided in 2015, for the first time, to take responsibility for a portion of the Jewish community's security needs and expenses.

Culture

In the twenty-first century, Dutch Jews enjoy a rich and diverse cultural life. This is made possible in part by 'light' forms of community involving few responsibilities and many opportunities for ad hoc participation and flexibility. Courses, festivals, lectures, concerts, performances, festivals, and an annual football tournament (Jom Ha Voetbal; PLATE 77) are characteristic ways in which many Dutch Jews express their Jewish identity. Meanwhile, that identity has become merely part of a much broader mosaic of backgrounds and interests; the dominant significance of Jewish identity in the decades immediately following the Second World War is, for many Dutch Jews, a thing of the past. ¹³⁸

Such expressions of Jewish cultural interest are supported by a number of institutions—not least by the Jewish Historical Museum (Joods Historisch Museum, JHM), located since 1987 in the old synagogue complex in Amsterdam's Jonas Daniel Meyerplein. The museum has grown into a leading cultural centre, which has won the loyalty of many Jewish visitors with an ever-innovative programme of exhibitions and events. In 2010 the JHM joined forces with the Portuguese Synagogue and the Hollandsche Schouwburg to form what is known as the Joods Cultureel Kwartier (Jewish Cultural Quarter, JCK). The PIG's old Ets Haim library, most of which had been sent to the Jewish National and University Library in Jerusalem on long-term loan in 1978, returned from Israel and has become a magnet for scholars from around the globe. Moreover, this library has been added to UNESCO's Memory of the World Register. These changes have turned the traditional Jewish quarter, now home to only a small number of Jews, into a 'virtual Jewish space' (a term coined by Ruth Ellen Gruber), like so many created throughout Europe since 1989. Another new initiative was launched there in 2016: a National Holocaust Museum, intended to become the primary place where the stories of the Dutch Jews in the period 1933-45 are recounted, remembered, and commemorated. Since 1999, Jewish knowledge has been passed on in the Joods Educatief Centrum Crescas (Crescas Jewish Educational Centre), which aspires to cover the entire breadth of the Jewish Netherlands. The idea behind Crescas, an initiative of Andreas Burnier, is to remedy, as much as possible, the loss of Jewish knowledge as a result of the war. Under its directors Rob Wurms, Michel Waterman, Julie Blocq, and Diklah Zohar, Crescas has built up a diverse programme of courses,

¹³⁸ For a vivid impression of the diversity and differing intensity associated with Jewish identity, and the role of the Shoah in that context, see the portrait of the Vuijsje extended family in Vuijsje, *Ons kamp*.

some of which are now offered online. 139 On a more ad hoc basis, there is also an annual Limmoed day modelled after the Limmud events in the United Kingdom; this gives Jews from a wide range of backgrounds the chance to teach and learn.

While Crescas and Limmoed are active within the Jewish community and the JCK serves as a bridge between that community and the larger Dutch society, Jewish writers and artists tend to operate primarily in mainstream society. It is striking that Jewish themes remain important to many of them. In the world of cabaret and stand-up comedy, for instance, Raoul Heertje and Micha Wertheim reflect on broader social themes but often casually refer to their Jewish identity. While there may now be a greater distance between mainstream society and the organized Jewish communities, it is writers and artists who have gone on informing and stimulating the general public with Jewish knowledge, culture, and tradition.

Conclusion: Social Visibility and Jewish Internationalization

In 1946 the social democrat and Zionist Sam de Wolff published a brief, gripping book on the Second World War years, with the telling title of *Geschiedenis der Joden in Nederland, laatste bedrijf* ('History of the Jews in the Netherlands: The Final Act'). It expressed his firm belief that the Holocaust had put an end to centuries of Jewish life in the Netherlands. Only scattered individuals were left behind, and their task was to close up shop. As he saw it, the liberation of the Netherlands had brought the history of the Dutch Jewish community to an end. De Wolff was not the only one with this belief. It persisted even several decades later, when Mozes Heiman Gans published his illustrated atlas of Dutch Jewish history up to 1940, under the title of *Memorboek* ('MemorBook'). This placed his visual collection of four centuries of Jewish heritage in the Netherlands in a medieval Jewish tradition that was resumed after 1945, especially by eastern European Jews: the writing of memor-books commemorating murdered and vanished communities.¹⁴⁰

Despite the conviction that the war had ended Jewish history in the Netherlands and the belief that the country's remaining Jews would soon emigrate to the United States and Israel or melt into mainstream society, some 30,000 Jews picked up the thread of their lives in the Netherlands. Without setting out to do so, they wrote a new postwar chapter, in which every aspect of life was overshadowed by the Holocaust and by the presence, from 1948 onwards, of the State of Israel. Continuity with pre-war life became apparent in the community's main institutions and structures, especially the

¹³⁹ Lockhorn, Andreas Burnier, 476–8; https://www.crescas.nl/>.

¹⁴⁰ M. H. Gans, Memorboek: Platenatlas van het leven der joden in Nederland van de middeleeuwen tot 1940 (Baarn, 1971); S. de Wolff, Geschiedenis der Joden in Nederland: Laatste bedrijf (Amsterdam, 1946). On De Wolff as an individual, see E. Gans, 'Sam de Wolff (1878–1960): Een typisch geval van "én-én"', in Püttmann et al. (eds., Markante Nederlandse zionisten, 50–63; S. de Wolff, Voor het land van belofte: Een terugblik op mijn leven (Nijmegen, 1978).

Jewish denominations (the NIK, PIK, and VLRJ) and the Zionist NZB. Furthermore, some survivors saw it as their responsibility to preserve the old traditions, history, and heritage of the vanished community as well as they could and to pass them on to younger generations. At the same time, there were sweeping new developments, some resulting from a deliberate ideological agenda and others from less deliberate processes in Dutch society and international Jewish life.

Looking back at the period from 1945 onwards, we can see at least two main tendencies. First of all, the social position of Jews in Dutch society changed fundamentally. At first, the focus was on the Dutch people as a unified community, on rebuilding the country. Surviving Jews were therefore expected simply to pick up where they had left off, as best they could. No special attention was paid to the exceptional circumstances in which the Jews found themselves. The swift repillarization of Dutch society made room for a Jewish community again, as one of the religious and belief groups in Dutch society. This implied that religion served as the main prism and made the return of the NIK as a monolithic organization almost inevitable, despite the idealism of the JCC and its running start as a new unifying organization. Events did not take this course because most surviving Jews were not especially religious—a sub-stantial proportion regarded themselves as non-religious or secular—but most of them saw the NIK as the only possible overarching Jewish organization in the post-war social climate. Meanwhile, the decimation of the community consigned it to a marginal role; the national authorities involved them in the preparatory stages of decisionmaking much less often than before 1940. Furthermore, the community life being reconstructed was almost invisible in the public sphere, certainly including the emerging culture of memory surrounding the war years. Jewish tales of victimhood were hard to reconcile with the emphasis on the Netherlands as a nation of resisters.

Beginning in the 1960s, the position of the Jews in Dutch society changed radically. They shifted from the margins towards the centre under the influence of mutually reinforcing processes such as the cultural revolution, a redefinition of public morality, a change in the culture of memory of the Second World War, and the arrival of new ethnic and religious minorities in the Netherlands. In this multicultural period, the perceived identity of the Jewish community changed from religious to primarily cultural, and Dutch Jews came to be seen as the bearers of the moral legacy of the Second World War. Jews were assigned the new role of social conscience, and their mere presence kept the moral questions of wartime conduct very much alive. The high profile of Jews and Jewish organizations in Dutch society—in debates about not only the Second World War and Israel, but also other political issues, domestic and foreign—stood in contrast to the community's increasing polarization. Opposing camps gradually solidified on the two sides of the spectrum. In the meantime, a growing proportion of Dutch Jews expressed their Jewish identity mainly in private and in the family circle. This individualization of Jewish identity was made possible in part by the rapid growth

of new forms of expression of Jewish culture, which were flexible in nature and centred on less ideologically regimented institutions, such as the JMW and JHM.

The role of Jews in Dutch society seemed to become somewhat less central from the early twenty-first century onwards, in the context of a return to a more unified notion of national identity and a farewell to multiculturalism. Cultural and ethnic minorities were redefined in religious terms, and this emphasis on religion influenced the image of Dutch Jews. That is noteworthy given that the large majority of Dutch Jews still describe themselves as culturally Jewish, and a substantial number as secular Jews. Although the Second World War remained a moral benchmark for many people, it became secondary to new national, liberal moral concepts such as individual rights and discourses of emancipation. The position of Jews in Dutch society hence became more diffuse; they were sometimes presented as models of successful integration in public debate, but at other times they were seen as a strictly religious community with rites and customs that were difficult to reconcile with mainstream Dutch morality. The Dutch Jews appeared to be on their way from the centre to an increasingly marginal position as a relatively small and very diverse 'community' in a 'secular' society.

The second major development in the post-war period had to do with the internal history of Dutch Jewry—specifically, with their self-image and their role in the wider Jewish world. ¹⁴¹ In the proud self-image of the pre-war community, their identity had been formed by the confluence of the best of Dutch history and tradition with the best of Jewish history and tradition, and Dutch values such as tolerance and moderation had been integrated into a Jewish discourse of unity. Sigmund Seeligmann coined the well-known term for this symbiosis: the *species hollandia judaica*. The institutional manifestation of this self-image was the unified congregation (*eenheidsgemeente*), the NIK's concept of Jews from across the religious spectrum working together in a nominally Orthodox denominational system. Until 1940, this made it possible to keep the vast majority of Dutch Jews in a single denomination, the NIK; in this respect, the Dutch Jewish community stood in stark contrast to its counterparts in neighbouring countries. This led the community to prefer a degree of isolation from external influences, in order to avoid importing German Reform Judaism or strict eastern European Orthodoxy.

After 1945, that positive self-image soon transformed into its opposite. The unique character and isolation of the Dutch Jews had not helped them during the war years. Instead, they had shared the fate of other European Jewish communities. Furthermore, the Dutch nationalism implicit in the notion of the *species hollandia judaica* became suspect, since Dutch citizenship had not protected the Jews from deportation and murder. Another ideological factor was also involved: the growth of Zionism and its fulfilment in the State of Israel. Zionist ideology emphasized the unity of the Jewish people and rejected distinctions based on non-Jewish nationalities. This conflicted

¹⁴¹ For a more detailed treatment of this subject, see Wallet, 'Een familie van gemeenschappen'.

sharply with a sense of pride in a unique Dutch Jewish identity. Although some Jews—especially the rabbis and chief rabbis, the strict Orthodox Agudat Yisrael movement, and some secular non-Zionist leaders—still strove to preserve ancient Jewish customs and traditions and thus safeguard Rabbi Dünner's legacy, including the unified congregation, they were ultimately unsuccessful. The policies, self-image, and orientation of Jewish communal life shifted from an emphasis on distinctiveness to a deliberate effort to become involved in international Jewish developments. Zionism became highly influential in Jewish communities, forms of Jewish cultural expression, and Jewish youth organizations. The orientation towards Israel was virtually omnipresent, and organizations involved in supporting the Jewish state grew and evolved at an explosive pace. No less important was the impact of Anglo-American Judaism. American Jewish models were seen as progressive and modern, well suited to the new post-war conditions of Jewish life. American Jewish influence took very diverse forms, ranging from Jewish cultural centres, books, and music to the hasidic Chabad movement and the modernization of the Reform Jewish congregations.

While the international Jewish context had initially favoured the preservation of the Dutch unified congregation, not as an expression of Dutch Jewish identity but as a unified national Jewish body, the institution lost much of its significance from the 1960s onwards. As cultural Judaism flourished and Dutch society, including Jewish life, became increasingly polarized, organizations such as the NIK came under great pressure. The result was the gradual disintegration of the unified congregation and the flowering of many alternative Jewish communities. While it was somewhat reasonable for the NIK to present itself as representing the entire community until the 1970s, that was no longer possible from the 1980s onwards. The majority of Dutch Jews no longer belonged to one of the religious or Zionist organizations but had individualized their Jewish identity. This paralleled developments in Jewish communities in many other countries, although the Netherlands does seem to have a relatively large number of unaffiliated Jews. The result was a profound transformation in the landscape of the Jewish 'community', which came to see itself no longer as a relatively isolated and privileged island in the international Jewish world, but as a province of that world. The same great diversity of Jewish organizations, self-images, and modes of expression found in the United States and Israel became visible in the Netherlands too. Alongside the traditional, 'moderate' Orthodoxy of the NIK and PIK, modern Orthodoxy, ultra-Orthodoxy, and hasidism established a presence. Reform Judaism proliferated, and Conservative or Masorti Judaism was represented for the first time, as were Jewish Renewal and Jewish Reconstructionism. Since 1945, international Jewish developments, supported by Zionist, religious, and secular Jewish ideologies, had drastically altered the map of Dutch Jewish life.

After De Wolff's 'final act' of Jewish history in the Netherlands, a new chapter had been written in spite of everything. In absolute terms, the number of Jews remained more or less stable from 1945 onwards, with 30,000 to 40,000 halakhic Jews, but even so, the nature of Jewish community life changed fundamentally. In the twenty-first century, traces of the old pre-war community could still be found here and there, in the survival of certain institutions, but what was most striking was the extent to which Jewish life had become part of international Jewish developments. The constantly changing position of Jews in Dutch society only seemed to reinforce that process. Developments in Dutch society and in international Jewry resulted in a stable, diverse 'family' of Jewish communities, linked mainly by their history and heritage and by family and community ties. This gave Dutch Jews a distinctive profile after all, both in Dutch society and in international Jewish life. ¹⁴²

¹⁴² On the Wittgensteinian idea of 'a family of communities', see Wallet, 'Een familie van gemeenschappen', and M. Satlow, 'Defining Judaism: Accounting for "Religions" in the Study of Religion', *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 74 (2006), 837–60.

DUTCH JEWISH HISTORY A VISUAL ESSAY





1. The gravestone of Rebecca, daughter of Rabbi Mozes, in Tienen, Belgium, the oldest Jewish gravestone in the Low Countries (1255)

Royal Museums of Art and History, Brussels





2. The burning of Jews during the plague epidemic of 1349. From the chronicle of Gillis li Muisis (c.1353)

Brussels KBR, MS 13076-77 Reproduced by courtesy of the KBR, Brussels



3. Christ flanked by personifications: Ecclesia (Christianity) and Synagoga (Judaism). By the side of Ecclesia stands a baptismal font, while Synagoga is placed next to hell in the shape of a dragon's gaping jaws. Lambert of Saint-Omer, *Liber floridus*, twelfth century

Ghent University Library, BHSL.HS.0092. Reproduced under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike International licence, CC BY-SA 4.0, https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/



4. The ritual murder of the boy Simon of Trent, said to have been committed by Jews in 1475. From Hartmann Schedel's *Weltchronik* (1490-3)

Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Rar. 287, fo. 254 $^{\circ}$



5. The expulsion of the Jews from France by King Philip Augustus in 1182. From *Grandes chroniques de France* (c.1320)

Brussels, KBR, MS 5. Reproduced by courtesy of the KBR, Brussels



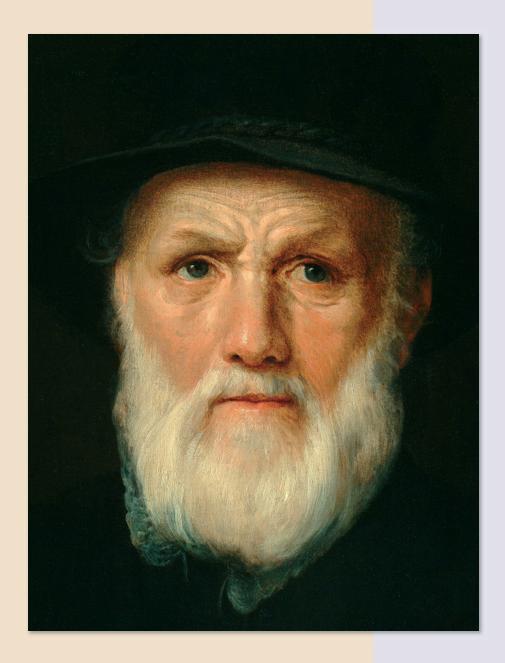
6. Four Jews in conversation. Chimney frieze from Utrecht (1530-40)

Image and copyright CMU/Ernst



7. A Christian comes to borrow money from a Jew. From an edition of Cicero's De officiis (Augsburg, 1531)

INTERFOTO/Alamy Stock Photo



8. In his polemical writings the theologian, man of letters, and engraver Dirck Volckertszoon Coornhert (1522-90) opposed all restrictions on public forms of worship. By Cornelis Cornelisz van Haarlem (1586-8)

Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem. Photo: Tom Haartsen



9. The Jewish cemetery in Ouderkerk aan de Amstel. The purchase of land for a cemetery in 1614 marked a further step in the recognition of the right of Jews to practise their religion in public. Engraving by Abraham Bloteling (1670) after a drawing by Jacob van Ruisdael

Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

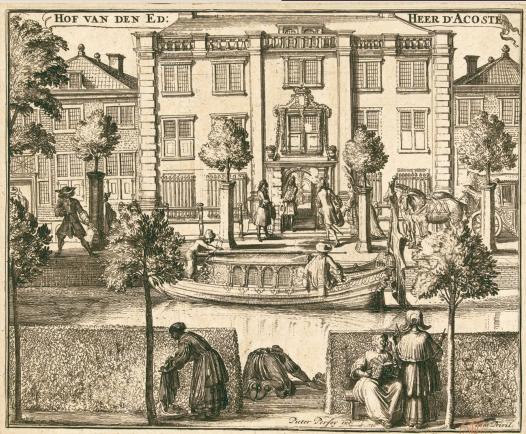
10. The Diamond-Cutter, by Jan Luyken (1694)

Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

De Diamantslyper. *SynDropies uiteenBron, Die eindicht, noch begon.



De Mens wil gaaren cierlyck syn,
Door Diamantsteen, of Robyn,
Op dat Zyn Rykdom zy gepreesen:
**Was beeter dat hy't recht begon,
Om eens te blincken als de Son,
Dat sal een andre Schoonheid weesen.

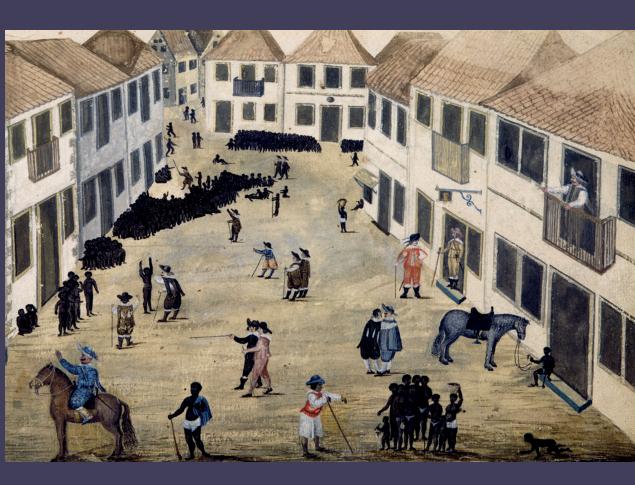


11. The residence of Jerónimo Nunes da Costa (Mozes Curiël), agent of the king of Portugal in the Dutch Republic, on the Nieuwe Herengracht (now no. 47) in Amsterdam, part of a series of three views of residences of Portuguese Jews in Amsterdam by Romeyn de Hooghe (*c*.1695)



12. The slave market in Jodenstraat, Recife, in the colony of New Holland in Brazil. From *Das Thier Buch* by Zacharias Wagener (*c.*1638)

Kupferstich-Kabinett, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden. Photo: Herbert Boswank





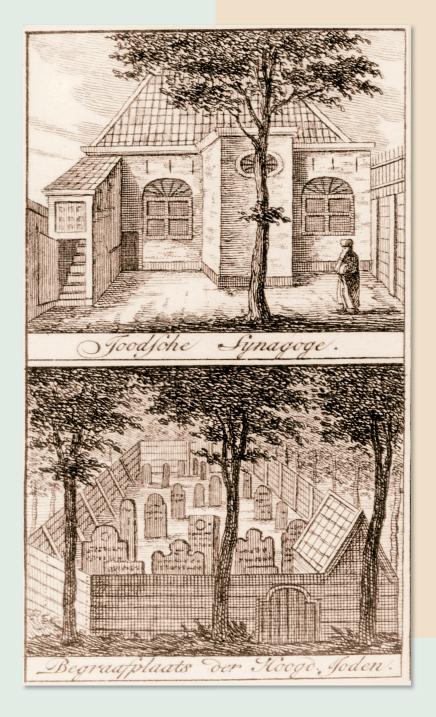
13. Don Antonio Lopez Suasso (1614-85), the wealthiest Portuguese Jew in Amsterdam in his day Amsterdam Museum







16. Houtmarkt in Amsterdam with the Ashkenazi Synagogue on the left and the Portuguese Synagogue behind the trees on the right, by Hendrik Keun (1737-87)



17. Synagogue and cemetery of the Ashkenazi Jews in Middelburg. Engraving (1780)

Jewish Historical Museum, Amsterdam. Collection of Arthur and Jetty Polak



18. Synagogue at Levendaal 14 in Leiden, by Jacob Timmermans (1787)

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19. *Mikveh* (ritual bath) in the Great Synagogue in Amsterdam in 1783, by Caspar Philips Jacobsz after Pieter Wagenaar Jr.

Amsterdam City Archives



20. Rabbi Isaac Aboab da Fonseca, by Aernout Naghtegael (1686)

ANNO

Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

צורת תמונת איש בעודו תי יצחק ליום אחרון בבותרת לפני יא י-עמר וורו

SOLUTION OF THE PARTY OF THE PA 21. The rabbi and publisher Menasseh ben Israel (1604-57), who established the first Jewish printinghouse in Amsterdam in 1626. Engraving after Salom Italia (1642)

Lebrecht Music & Arts / Alamy Stock Photo



22. The pastor Gualterus Boudaen with the Hebrew Tanakh, by Cornelius Janson van Ceulen (II) (1665)

 $Collection of the Jewish Historical Museum, Amsterdam. \\ Acquired with the support of Vereniging Rembrandt$



23. The supposed Jewish messiah Shabetai Tsevi, depicted as a king crowned by angels and guarded by lions. From the title page of a *tikun* (special prayer-book) by David de Castro Tartas (1666)

University of Amsterdam, Special Collections



24. Portrait of Baruch Spinoza, eighteenth century

Collection of the Jewish Historical Museum, Amsterdam. On loan from Haags Historisch Museum



 $\textbf{25.} \ \ \textbf{Interior of the Portuguese Synagogue in Amsterdam, by Emanuel de Witte (1680)}$



26. The Portuguese Synagogue on the Houtgracht in Amsterdam, by Romeyn de Hooghe (*c*.1695)



27. Portuguese Jews sharing a Passover meal, by Bernard Picart (1725) Amsterdam Museum



28. Looting of the home of the Jewish merchant and banker Isaac de Pinto in Sint Antoniesbreestraat (now no. 69) in Amsterdam during the Undertakers' Riot of 1696, by Simon Fokke (1779-81)

Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam



29. Dr Ephraim Bueno, Jewish physician and man of letters, by Rembrandt Harmensz van Rijn (1645-7)



30. *Ketubah* of Isaac ben Abraham de Pinto and Rahel Rovigo, by Salom Italia (1654), with signatures including that of Menasseh ben Israel

Ets Haim-Livraria Montezinos, Amsterdam



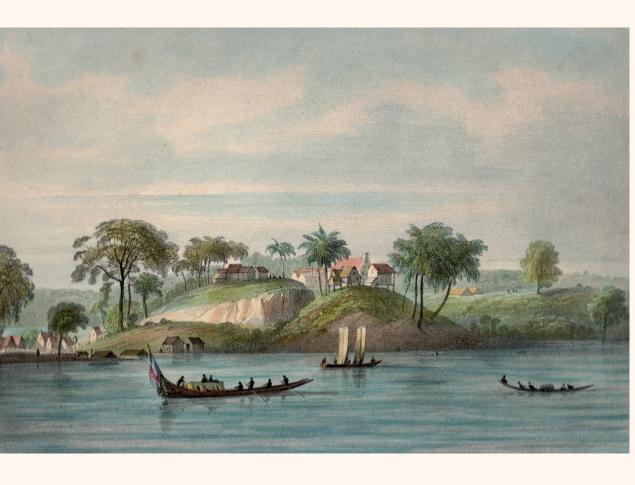
31. The father and husband of the profligate Johanna disguised as Polish Jews in the third act of the comedy *De Spilpenning of de verkwistende vrouw* by Thomas Asselijn. Oil on panel, by Cornelis Troost (1741)

Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam



32. The courtyard of the old Exchange in Amsterdam. Oil on panel by Emanuel de Witte (1653)

Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam



33. Synagogue in Jodensavanne on the hill by the Suriname River, c.1830. From *Voyage à Surinam* by Pierre Jacques Benoit, Brussels (1839)

 ${\sf Collection}\ of\ {\sf Kenneth}\ {\sf Boumann}.\ {\sf Reproduced}\ {\sf by}\ {\sf permission}\ of\ {\sf Kenneth}\ {\sf Boumann}$



34. First National Assembly in The Hague in 1796, by George Kockers (1797)

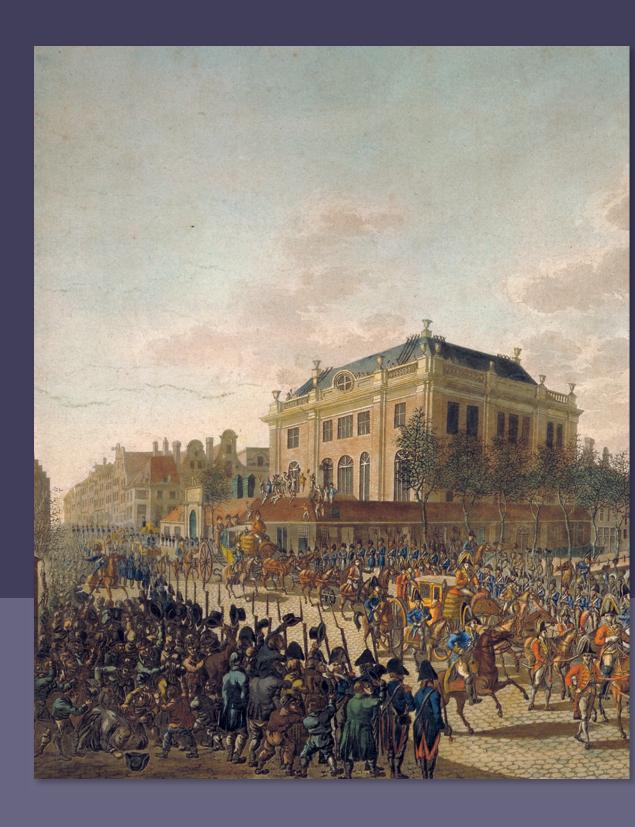
Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam



35. Allegory of the respectability of all citizens, including a Jew (third from the left), by Hendrik Roosing after August Christian Hauck and C. Bakker (1795)

Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam







38. The entry of King Louis Napoleon into Amsterdam on 20 April 1808, past the Portuguese Synagogue towards the Great Synagogue of the Ashkenazi Jews. Aquatint (1808) by J. A. Loutz after Jan Anthonie Langendijk

Collection of the Jewish Historical
Museum, Amsterdam



39. The lawyer Jonas Daniël Meijer (1780-1834), who acted as unofficial adviser on Jewish affairs to King William I. Painting (1810-30) by Louis Moritz

Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam



40. Memorial card marking the death of the Amsterdam rabbi Samuel Berenstein, with Synagoga, the personification of Judaism, by his grave, by Morris Jacob Dessaur (1839) Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam



41. Four generations of the Asser family, by Rienk Jelgerhuis (1787)

Photo: Jewish Historical Museum, Amsterdam. Collection of Professor W. D. H. Asser



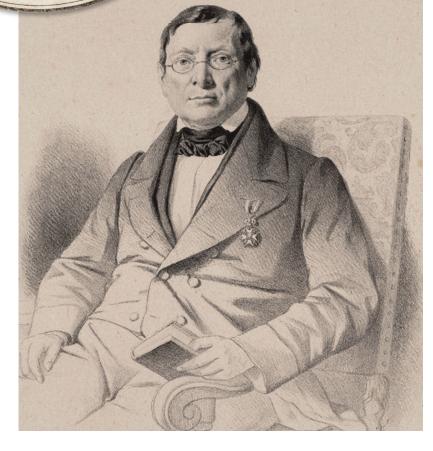
42. The diarist Netje Asser, by Jan Adam Kruseman Jansz (1831) Jewish Historical Museum, Amsterdam. On Ioan from a private collection



43. House of the Orangist Benjamin Cohen in Amersfoort, by J. A. le Campion after G. A. Meysenheym

Jewish Historical Museum, Amsterdam. Collection of J. van Velzen

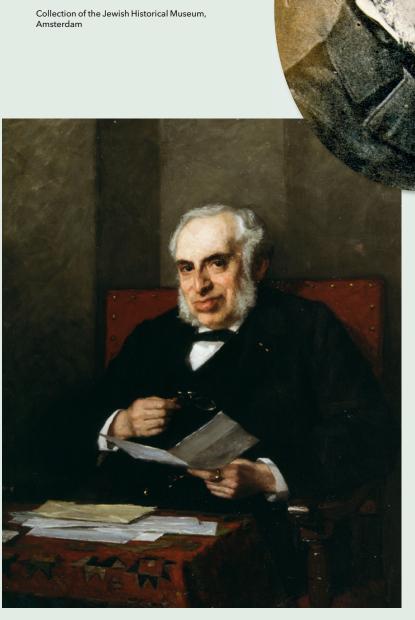
a Amersfourd.



44. The teacher, translator, and leading Jewish intellectual Samuël Israël Mulder, by Moritz Calisch (1860)

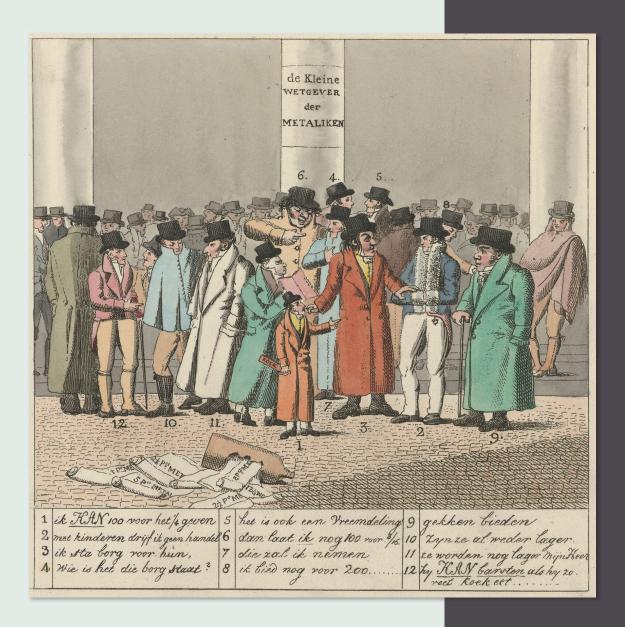
Amsterdam City Archives

45. The Amsterdam administrator, philanthropist, and Orthodox leader Akiba Lehren, by M. Poppelauer (*c*.1850)



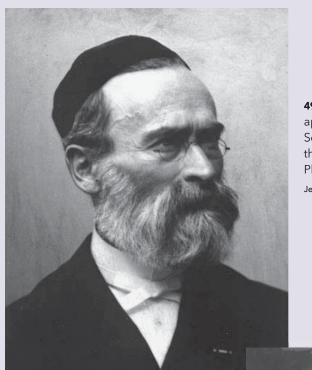
46. The banker and politician Abraham Carel Wertheim, by Thérèse Schwartze (1896).

Collection of the Jewish Historical Museum, Amsterdam





48. The Jewish quarter in Amsterdam, by E. A. Hilverdink (1889) Collection of the Jewish Historical Museum, Amsterdam. On loan from Amsterdam Museum



49. Dr Joseph Hirsch Dünner (1833-1911), appointed director of the Dutch Israelite Seminary in 1862. In 1874 he also became the chief rabbi of North Holland. Photograph, *c.*1900

Jewish Historical Museum, Amsterdam



50. Rabbi Meijer de Hond, by Atelier Jacob Merkelbach (1928)

Amsterdam City Archives



51. An advertisement from 1935 for Blue Band, a margarine originally developed by the Jewish-owned Van den Bergh company that in 1930 became part of Unilever

Archief Nederlandse Unilever Bedrijven



52. Dr Aletta H. Jacobs (1854-1929), the first woman physician in the Netherlands, at her desk (1907)

Nationaal Archief, Collection of Spaarnestad



53. Rosa Manus, campaigner for women's suffrage and women's rights, casts her vote. From *Het Leven*, 1921

Nationaal Archief, Collection of Spaarnestad



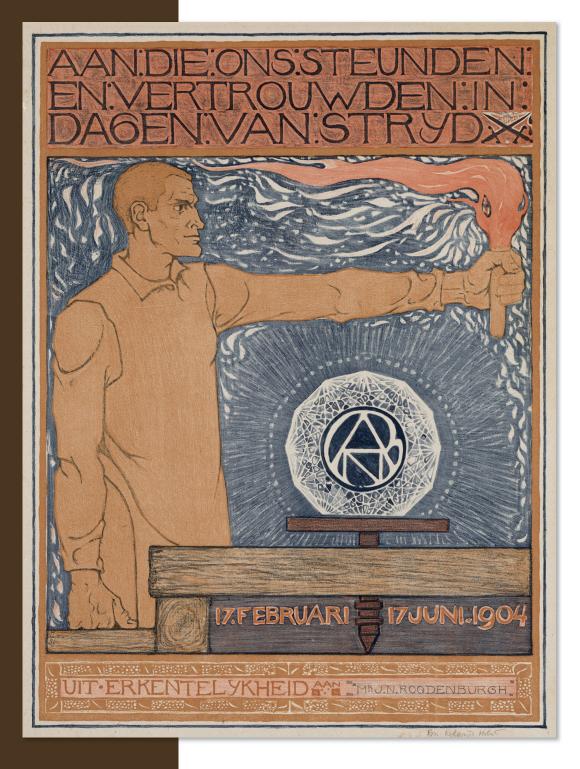
54. Rosalie Marie Wertheim, wife of A. C. Wertheim, by Therese Schwartze (1897)

Collection of the Jewish Historical Museum, Amsterdam



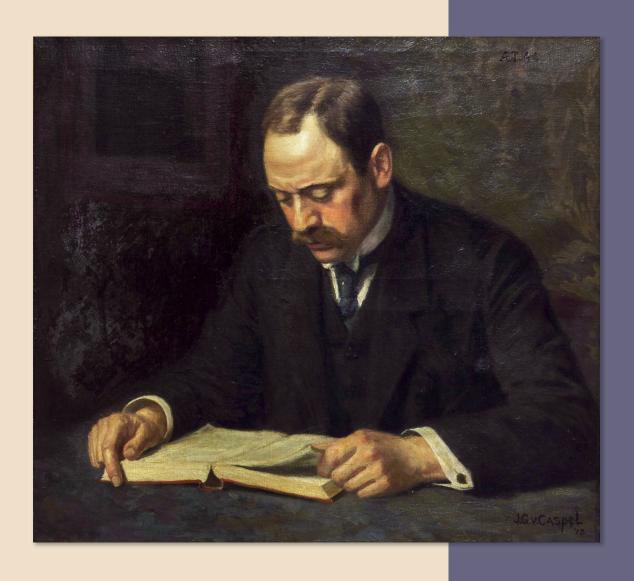
55. Synagogue in Prinsestraat, Enschede, erected in 1927-8, as depicted in a stained-glass window designed by Lambert Lourijssen and later restored by Annamiek Punt.

Photograph by Jan de Jong



56. The Torchbearer, poster for the Algemene Nederlandse Diamantbewerkers Bond (ANDB), by Richard Roland Holst (1904)

Amsterdam City Archives



57. Trade union leader and social democrat Henri Polak, by Johann Georg van Caspel (1912)
IISG BG \$15/3



58. Princess Juliana visits De Joodsche Invalide, 1938 Jewish Historical Museum, Amsterdam. Collection of J. van Velzen



59. European and Iraqi Jews in front of the Mussry family home in Surabaya for a barmitzvah, *c.*1930 Collection of Eli Dwek



60. Jewish refugees from Germany, with Ernst Kaufmann among them, at Nieuwesluis training camp in Wieringermeer, where they learned agricultural skills. Photograph by Roman Vishniac, *c*.1938

© Mara Vishniac Kohn, courtesy of the International Center of Photography



61. The board of the Jewish Council for Amsterdam, with the presidents Abraham Asscher (far left) and David Cohen (to Asscher's left) seated at the table. Photograph by Johan de Haas, late 1942 Beeldbank WO₂ (Image Bank WW₂), NIOD Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies, Joh. de Haas



62. Wagons ready to deport inmates from Westerbork transit camp, by Leo Kok (1944)

Collection of the Jewish Historical Museum, Amsterdam. On loan from J. Nijstad



63. Jews driven together in Jonas Daniël Meijerplein in the first round-up, on 22 February 1941

Beeldbank WO2 (Image Bank WW2), NIOD Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies



64. The courtyard of the Hollandsche Schouwburg in Plantage Middenlaan, where Jews assembled for transport to Westerbork transit camp. Photograph by Lydia Nobelen-Riezouw, 1942

Beeldbank WO2 (Image Bank WW2), NIOD Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies, L. van Nobelen-Riezouw





65. Jewish children wearing the yellow star on their clothing watch a performance by the after-school child-care programme (Buitenschoolse Jeugdzorg, BJZ) in a classroom in Roerstraat, Amsterdam, 1943

Beeldbank WO2-NIOD

66. A Jewish man and boy from Amsterdam-Zuid reporting for transport to Westerbork at a gathering place near the sports fields in Olympiaplein, Amsterdam, on 20 June 1943

Beeldbank WO2 (Image Bank WW2), NIOD Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies

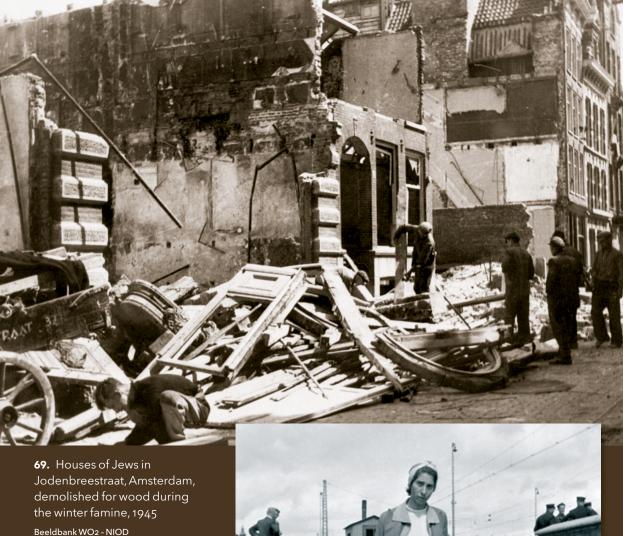


67. Nol van Wezel and Max Kannewasser, known as the jazz duo of Johnny & Jones, at work in the metal barracks in Westerbork transit camp. By Leo Kok, 1944

Jewish Historical Museum, Amsterdam. Collection of Leo Kok, on loan from Kitty Nijstad-de Wijze



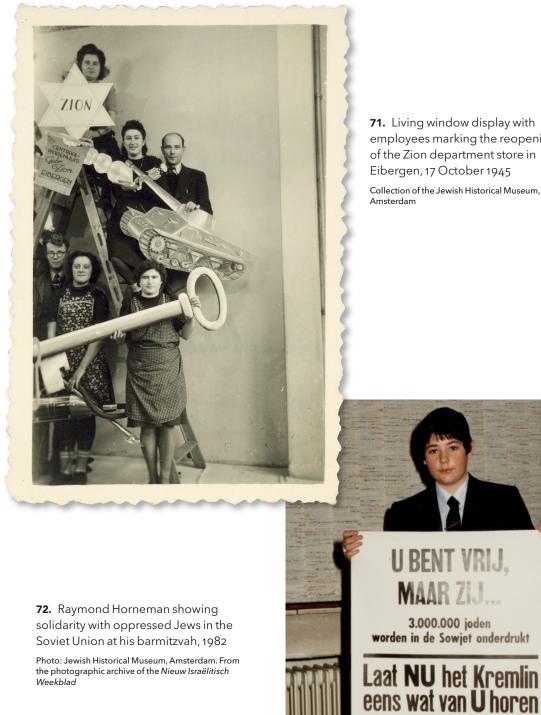
68. Sign reading 'Judenstrasse/Joodschestraat' ('Jewish Street') at the entrance to Nieuwe Kerkstraat. Photograph by Frits Rotgans, 1943





70. Ernestine van Witsen-Weinberg outside Central Station in Amsterdam, returning from Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. Photograph by Emmy Andriesse, 1945

Leiden University Library



71. Living window display with employees marking the reopening of the Zion department store in Eibergen, 17 October 1945

Collection of the Jewish Historical Museum,

1 Miljoen nederlandse handtekeningen Voor helpen met geld: Giro 3019960 Stichting tot steun

the photographic archive of the Nieuw Israëlitisch Weekblad



73. Ronny Naftaniel of CIDI speaks at a demonstration of solidarity with Israel in Amsterdam's Apollohal during the Gulf War, 1991

Jewish Historical Museum, Amsterdam. From the photographic archive of the Nieuw Israëlitisch Weekblad



74. Mayor Eberhard van der Laan lighting the menorah in Amsterdam's Dam Square at Hanukah, 2010

© ANP 2019 Photo: Toussaint Kluiters



75. Two pupils in the Orthodox Jewish combined school Het Cheider. Photograph by Jenny E. Wesly, 1983

Jewish Historical Museum, Amsterdam

76. Ernst Numann, vice president of the district court in The Hague, and Ed van Thijn, former mayor of Amsterdam, during the memorial ceremony in Amsterdam's Portuguese Synagogue marking the fiftieth anniversary of the liberation of the Netherlands. Photograph by Jaime Halegua, 1995

Jewish Historical Museum, Amsterdam. From the photographic archive of the *Nieuw Israëlitisch Weekblad*





77. The winning Jom Ha Voetbal team in 1995, with Rabbi les Vorst from Amstelveen and footballer Marcel Liesdek in the centre and sports journalist Frits Barend in the background. Photograph by Han Singels

 $Jewish\ Historical\ Museum, Amsterdam.\ Purchased\ with\ the\ support\ of\ the\ Stichting\ Vrienden\ van\ het\ JHM\ and\ the\ Moos\ Cohenfonds$



78. Rabbi Marianne van Praag officiating at the wedding of Joel and Siny Thuis in the synagogue in Dieren, 2012. Photograph by Amit Bar Collection of the Jewish Historical Museum, Amsterdam. Reproduced by permission of A. Bar

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